

# THE PANJAB PAST AND PRESENT

Vol. XXVI-I

APRIL 1992

Serial No. 51



DEPARTMENT OF PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

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**DEPARTMENT OF PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA**

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# Inscriptions on the Coins of Muslim Kings

GURBACHAN SINGH NAYYAR\*

Coins of all ages are most valuable treasure of antiquarian interest which provide invaluable assistance for connecting missing links of past history and for equipping us with indispensable knowledge of several aspects of the rulers and their states. Much has been done in numismatic studies and researches by Wilson, Edward Thomas, Prinsep, Cunningham, Rodgers and others. Out of the wide variety of coins such as Sikh coins, Persian coins, Central Asian coins, coins of native states like Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Maler Kotla, Alwar etc., we take the coins of some Muslim kings. The genealogical tables of various dynasties will help us to recapitulate the chronology of the respective rulers. We reproduce here the translation of Arabic into English of a few coins as given by Syad Muhammad Latif vide his *Lahore : Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities*, Lahore, 1892.

## Ghaznvide Dynasty\*\*

### Genealogy of the Kings of Ghizni

Sabuktagin		
Ismail	Mahmud	Muhammad
Abdul Rashid		
	Masud I	
Ibrahim	Modud	Farakhzad
Masud III	Masud II	
Sultan Arsalan	Bahram Shah	
	Khusrow Shah	
	Khusrow Malik	

---

\*Professor, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

\*\*Spellings of dynastic and personal names kept as used in Latif's work mentioned in the text.

Muslim kings took pride in calling themselves the Deputy of the Khalifa of Baghdad. The expression 'Amir of the faithful' inscribed on the coins signifies the Khalifa of the time. Amir Sabuktagin who flourished in the time of Almoatti, Khalifa of Baghdad, was a Tartar by birth and having been a trained horseman in the service of Alaptagin achieved numerous victories in the battle-fields. He died in Tarmuz in Balkh in August 997 A.D. when he was 56 years old and was buried in Ghizni. His coins which are quite in line with the principles of theocracy as envisaged by Muslim kings depict and bestow confidence on the Almighty who is deemed to have no equal, associate or companion and His command considered as supreme one. Muhammad was acknowledged as Prophet of God.

There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God. God is one, with no compeer. Obedient to the command of God, Nuh alias Sabuktagin, son of Mansur.

Sultan Mahmud surnamed Amin-ul-Millat Yamin-ud-Daulah, or the asylum of Faith flourished in the time of Alkadar Billah, the Abbasi, Khalifa of Baghdad. He was the right hand of the state and was also known as *Butshikan* or the Iconoclast. He was the eldest son of Sabuktagin. He died of the stone on 29 April 1030 in the 63rd year of his age and the 33rd of his reign. He was buried by torch-light in Kasr Ferozi, known as the place of triumph at Ghizni. He struck the following coins at Lahore in 419 A.H. which he calls here Mahmudpur :

Beginning in the name of God the coin was struck at Mahmudpur in 419 A.H.

The coins of Mahmud bear the name of Khalifa and of Mahmud with his usual titles. The reverse and the margin bear inscriptions in Hindi characters.

Masud-I son of Mahmud having deposed his brother Muhammad ascended the throne in 1031. The army deposed him and put him to death in the castle of Kari in 1042. He was the contemporary of Khalifa of Baghdad. His coins after the Kalma read :

Obedient to the command of God, victorious of the religion of God, Masud.

Coins of Ibrahim, the brother of Farakhzad and son of Masud who ascended the throne on his brother's death and died in 1098 after reigning 42 years read :

(i) The great and just Sultan, the mightiest of kings, the most noble of sovereign, the father of victory, Ibrahim.

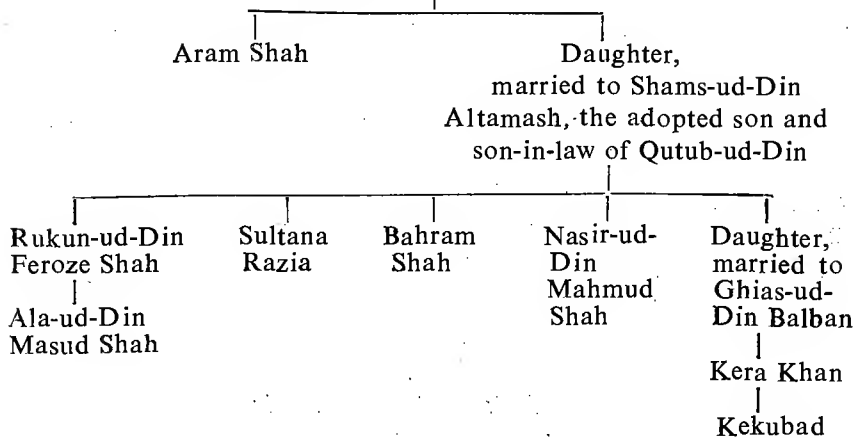
## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

- (ii) There is no God but God, and Muhammad the Prophet of God. Obedient to the command of God, the king of Islam.

Khusrow Shah son of Emperor Bahram became the saluted king of Ghizni on the death of his father. He died at Lahore in 1160 after seven years of reign and his son Khusrow Malik ascended the throne. He was destined to be the last of the line of Ghizni kings who had reigned from 962 to 1186 and the empire passed from the house of Ghizni to that of Ghour dynasty.

### The Ghori and Tartar Slave Dynasties

Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori  
(Succeeded by his slave and General  
Qutub-ud-Din Ebuk)



Sultan Shahab-ud-Din surnamed Muhammad Ghori bin Sam is considered as the founder of Muslim Empire in India. He reigned for thirty-two years from the commencement of his reign at Ghizni. While on his march to his western provinces he was assassinated on the bank of the Indus by the Ghakkars, the prominent tribesmen of the times on 14 March 1206. He was succeeded by his slave and General Qutub-ud-Din Ebuk. The adverse of his coins reads :

**Coins of  
Muhammad  
Ghori**

The great Sultan, the honour of the world and religion, the father of victory, Muhammad. The margin to the reverse of his coins has the inscription : He is the Lord who sent His Prophet for guidance with a true religion that he might cause that religion to triumph over all others.



**Coins of Qutub-ud-Din and Yelduz**

The coins struck by Qutub-ud-Din Ebuk also bear almost the same impression. The king who temporarily occupied the Punjab soon after the accession of Qutub-ud-Din Ebuk in 1206 was Yelduz. His coins have the following inscription :

- (i) Honoured in this world and in religion, the slave of God, Yelduz.
- (ii) The great Sultan honoured in the world and religion, Yelduz.

Aram Shah ascended the throne after the demise of his father Qutub-ud-Din in 1210 but was deposed the same year by Shams-ud-Din Altamash who ruled till 1235 when he expired.

A specimen of his coins bear the inscription :

**Coins of Shams-ud-Din Altamash** The great Sultan, the son of the world and religion, the father of victory, Altamash, the king, the head of the faithful.

He struck a coin at Lahore with the inscription :

Obv : The just and great king Sultan Altamash.

Rev : Struck at Lahore.

**Coins of Rukun-ud-Din Feroze Shah** Rukun-ud-Din Feroze was crowned king on the demise of his father Altamash at Delhi. His sister Sultana Razia defeated him with the result that he was deposed during the very year of his accession i.e. November 1236. Sultan Rukun-ud-Din's coins bear the inscription in Hindi :

***Suritan Sri Rukun-ud-Din***

Some coins bear the impression of a horseman and a bull.

**Coins of Sultana Razia** The coins of Sultana Razia who succeeded her brother Rukun-ud-Din Feroze and remained on the throne of Delhi till 1239 have the word 'Razia' inscribed on them. Some of the coins read :

The great Sultan contended in this world....

**Coins of Bahram Shah** Coins of Moiz-ud-Din Bahram Shah son of Altamash bear the inscription in Hindi on the obverse :

***Sri Moij***

The reverse of the coins bear the impression of a horseman:

## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

The coins of Ala-ud-Din Masud read :

<b>Inscriptions of Ala-ud-Din Masud</b>	The great Sultan, elevated in state and religion, the father of victory, Masud Shah, the king Struck during the reign of Imam Mustasam, the chief of the faithful.
---	--

Ala-ud-Din Masud succeeded Moiz-ud-Din Bahram Shah. He was the son of Rukun-ud-Din Feroze and was deposed by his uncle Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud who placed him in confinement in 1246.

<b>Coins of Nasir-Din Mahmud</b>	The coins of Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud bear almost the same impression as those of Ala-ud-Din Masud. Nasir-ud-Din was the son of Shams-ud-Din Altamash who succeeded Ala-ud-Din. He reigned for more than twenty years when he expired in the year 1266.
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<b>Coins of Ghias-ud-Din Balban</b>	Obv : The great Sultan, the asylum of state and religion, the father of victory, Sultan Balban.
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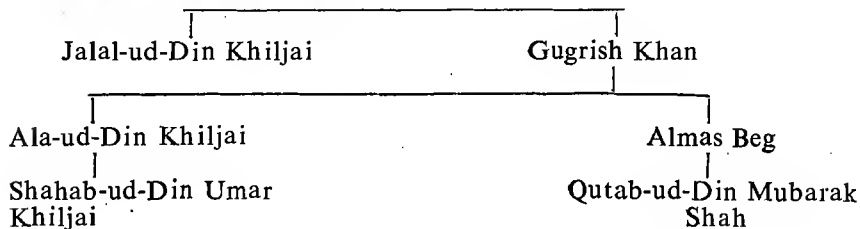
	Rev : The Imam, defender of the faithful, Mustasam.
--	---

	Margin : This coin has been struck in the metropolis of Delhi.
--	--

Ghias-ud-Din Balban was the son-in-law of Altamash. He occupied the throne till 1286 when he died and buried in Dar-ul-Aman in the precincts of Qutab Minar, Delhi.

The coins of Moiz-ud-Din Kekubad bear the same inscription as above. Kekubad was the grand son of Ghias-ud-Din Balban who ruled till 1288 when he was murdered by Jalal-ud-Din Feroze Khiljai.

### The Tartar Khiljai Dynasty



<b>Coins of Jalal-ud-Din Feroze Shah</b>	The great Sultan, the glory of State and religion, the father of victory, Feroze Shah, the Sultan. The Amir of the faithful, Imam Mustasam.
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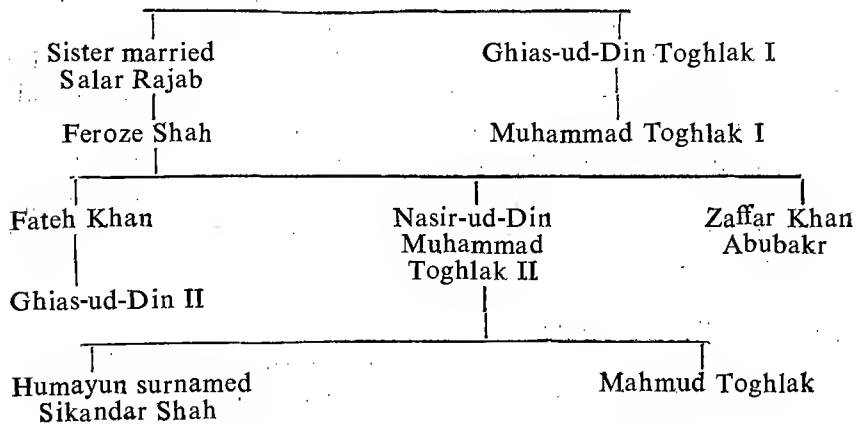
The Khiljai dynasty lasted from 1288 to 1321. Jalal-ud-Din Feroze Shah was the chief of the Khiljai dynasty who succeeded Kekubad on the throne of India at the age of seventy. He was murdered by his nephew Ala-ud-Din in 1295 after the seventh year of his reign.

**Coins of** The second, Alexander, the right hand of state,  
**Ala-ud-Din** the victorious, the Amir of the faithful.  
**Khiljai** The coin was struck at the capital at Delhi in 701.

Ala-ud-Din Khiljai was crowned king in the end of 1296. He expired in the year 1316 after ruling India for 20 years. He was buried in the precincts of the Kutab Minar in Delhi.

**Coins of** Rev : Mubarak Shah, the king, son of the  
**Qutab-ud-Din** king, strengthened by the grace of  
**Mubarak Shah** God, the Amir of the faithful.  
 Margin : The coin was struck in the Dar-ul-Islam in the year 717.

#### The Tughlak Dynasty



The Tughlak dynasty lasted from 1321 to 1398. It may be said to have prolonged to 1412 including the period of Tymur's invasion.

**Coins of** The valiant Sultan, the asylum of State and  
**Ghias-ud-Din** religion Tughlak Shah, the conquering king, the Amir  
**Tughlak** of the faithful. This coin was struck at Delhi, the capital.

## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

Some of the coins have the inscription in Hindi :

### *Sri Sultan Ghias-ud-Din*

Ghias-ud-Din Toghlak was the son of a Turki slave of Ghias-ud-Din Balban by an Indian mother. He was elected king by the unanimous voice of the people. He was killed by falling down from the pavilion in 1325 and was buried in the environs of Delhi.

**Muhammad Toghlak** The coin became current in the time of the slave of God, depended on His mercy, Muhammad Toghlak. Verily, he who obeys the king, obeys God. Struck at Delhi, the capital.

Muhammad Toghlak was the eldest son of Ghias-ud-Din Toghlak and succeeded his father. He ruled for 27 years and died in 1351.

**Coins of Feroze Shah Toghlak** The great Sultan, the sword of religion, the Amir of the faithful, the father of victory, the king Feroze Shah; may his kingdom last for ever.

The coin was struck in the time of Imam, the Amir of the faithful, the father of victory, Almustasad Billah, may he reign for ever !

Feroze Shah Toghlak was the cousin of Muhammad Toghlak who ascended the throne after the latter's demise and ruled for 38 long years when he expired in 1388.

Fateh Khan, son of Feroze Shah also struck coins ;

Fateh Khan, son of Feroze Shah, may his dignity, by the grace of God, last for ever.

Struck in the time of Imam, the Amir of the faithful, the father of victory Almustasad; may his Khalifat last for ever.

Fateh Khan expired in 1379 during the life time of his father and was buried at a place known as Qadam Sharif situated at a distance of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the south of Lahori Gate of modern Delhi. The sacred foot-print believed to be the impression of the foot of the Prophet Muhammad, on a small slab of marble was placed over the grave. The place came to be known as Qadam Sharif owing to this reason.

**Coins of Abubakr Shah** Abubakr Shah son of Zaffar, son of Feroze Shah the Sultan, struck in the time of Khalifa Abu Abdullah; may his Khalifat last for eyer.

Abubakr Shah was the grandson of Feroze Shah Toghlak. He succeeded Ghias-ud-Din II and ruled for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years till 1389.

**Coins of  
Nasir-ud-Din  
Muhammad II  
and  
Mahmud  
Toghlak**

- (i) Muhammad Shah Sultan, the deputy of the Amir of the faithful; struck in the capital of Delhi, 793.
- (ii) The great Sultan, the father of victory, Mahmud Shah, son of Muhammad Shah, son of Feroze Shah Sultan. Struck in the time of the Imam, the head of the faithful, may his Khalifat last for ever !

Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Toghlak II succeeded Abubakr in 1390. He ruled only for six years. Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Toghlak II was succeeded by his eldest son, Humayun who was also known by the name of Sikandar Shah albeit, he expired after his reign of 45 days. He was succeeded by Mahmud Toghlak. His reign witnessed the invasion of Tamerlane (in A.D. 1398). Mahmud expired in 1412 after the reign of twenty long years. He is represented by gold coins.

#### **The Syad Dynasty**

Syad Khizar Khan  
|  
Syad Mubarak Shah  
|  
Syad Muhammad Shah  
|  
Syad Ala-ud-Din

**Coins of  
Syad Mubark  
Shah  
and  
Syad  
Muhammad  
Shah**

- (i) Mubark Shah Sultan, the deputy of the Amir of the faithful. Struck in the capital of Delhi in 835.
- (ii) Sultan Muhammad Shah son of Farid Shah (struck in the time of) the Khalifa, the Amir of the faithful, may his Khalifat last for ever—847.

The founder of the Syad Dynasty Khizar Khan was originally the viceroy of Lahore. He struck no coins in his own name on the assumption of authority albeit, he ruled India in the name of Tymur to whom he was committed to pay tribute. He got inscribed Tymur's name on the Khutba Mubark Shah when enthroned in 1421 after the demise of his father Khizar Khan. He was, however, murdered in 1435 while he was busy in worship in a mosque at Delhi. He was succeeded by his son Syad Muhammad Shah and ruled for a period of 12 years. He died in 1445.

## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

### The Lodi Dynasty

Bahlol Lodi

|  
Ala-ud-Din

|  
Sikandar

|  
Ibrahim

**Coins of**  
**(i) Bahlol**  
**Lodi**  
**(ii) Sikandar**  
**and**  
**(iii) Ibrahim**  
**Lodi**

- (i) Dependent on God, Bahlol Shah, the Sultan. Struck in the time of the Amir of the faithful—may his Khalifat last for ever !—in the capital of Delhi, in 858.
- (ii) Dependent on God, Sikandar Shah, son of Bahlol Shah I, Sultan. Struck in the time of the Amir of faithful, may his Khalifat last for ever ! in the capital of Delhi, in 898.
- (iii) Dependent on God, Ibrahim Shah, son of Sikandar Shah Sultan. Struck in the time of the Amir of the faithful, may his Khalifat last for ever !

Bahlol Lodi ruled for thirty-eight years and died in 1488. Sikandar succeeded his father Bahlol Lodi and ruled for twenty eight years and five months. He expired in 1517. He was succeeded by Ibrahim Lodi in 1517. He was slain in 1526 in the celebrated battle of Panipat fought between the Indians and the Mughals. The Mughal supremacy was acknowledged under Babar.

### The Sur Dynasty

Hassan Khan Sur

|  
Sher Shah Sur

|  
Nizam Khan

|  
Adil Shah Sur

|  
Salem Shah Sur

|  
Daughter married  
Muhammad Shah Sur

|  
Sikandar Shah Sur

|  
Feroze Shah Sur

**Coins of**  
**(i) Sher Shah**  
**(ii) Islam Shah**  
**(iii) Mohammad**  
**Shah**

- (i) Sher Shah, the Sultan; may God perpetuate his kingdom and state ! The friend of religion and the world, the father of victory, the just Sultan. There is no God, but God, and Muhammad is the prophet of God—

- (iv) Ibrahim Shah, and (v) Sikandar Shah
- Abubakr, Umar, Usman and Ali.
- (ii) The father of victory, Islam Shah, the son of Sher Shah, the Sultan, may God perpetuate his kingdom ! Struck in the time of the Amir, the defender of the faith, the splendour of the religion and of the world.
- (iii) The warrior by the grace of God, in the cause of religion, Muhammad Sheh, the Sultan; may God perpetuate his kingdom !
- (iv) Struck in the time of the Amir, the defender, the father of victory, the Sultan Ibrahim Shah, may God perpetuate his reign—962.
- (v) Struck in the time of Amir, the defender, dependent on God. Sikandar Shah, the Sultan—962.

Sher Shah Sur was crowned king of Bengal in 1539. He assumed sceptre of royalty at Agra on the flight of Mughal king Humayun. He was killed in 1545 by the bursting of a shell in Kalinjar. Jalal Khan succeeded him in the fortress of Kalinjar in 1545 by the title of Islam Shah. He reigned for about 8 years and expired at Gwalior in 1553. Muhammad Shah Sur, Adili, the son of Nizam Khan assumed the Imperial diadem in 1553. Ibrahim Shah, the brother-in-law of Muhammad Shah, usurped the throne. Albeit, Sikandar Shah having expelled Ibrahim Shah assumed the regalia of royalty. However, he expired in Bengal after a brief rule.

### The Moghul Dynasty

**Coins of** Sultan Mahmud Yarlaghi Amir Tymur, Gurgan.  
**Amir Tymur** There is no God but God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God—781.

Qutab-ud-Din Amir Tymur, Gurgan, surnamed Sahib-i-Qiran-i-Azim also known as Tymur Beg and Tymur Lang from his lameness. Born near Kesh on 6 April, 1336, he was fifth in descent from Karalchar Miyan, the relative and counsellor of Changez Khan. He died on 8 February 1405 at Alrar, 74 farsangs from Samarkand when he was seventy. He was buried at Samarkand in a tomb which he had himself caused to be erected for the purpose.

**Coin of** (i) Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar Badshah-i-Ghazi.  
 (i) Babar  
 (ii) Humayun and (ii) The great Sultan, the revered sovereign, Muhammad Humayun, the valiant; may

## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (iii) Akbar  | God, the most High perpetuates his kingdom and state. Struck at Chandahar—95.  |
| (iii)  | God is great. Eminent is His glory.<br>(Struck in the Mint of Lahore).<br>The great Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Muhammad Akbar, Badshahi-i-Ghazi, may God perpetuate his reign and state.<br>Struck at Agra in 971. (Agra Mint)  |
| Coins of<br>Jahangir,<br>Shah Jahan,<br>Aurangzeb<br>Alamgir | <p>The king Nur-ud-Din Jahangir,</p> <p>(i) Son of King Akbar has made the face of gold to shine like the sun and moon—Struck at Lahore, 1015.</p> <p>(ii) The second Lord of constellation Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Shah Jahan, Badshah-i-Ghazi. Struck in Lahore, the Dar-ul-Saltanat.</p> <p>(iii) The King Aurangzeb Alamgir. Struck gold coin in the world like the luminous sun.</p>   |
| Coins of<br>Shah Alam,<br>Jahangir Shah,<br>Farrukh Siyar    | <p>(i) The coin of Shah Alam Badshah-i-Ghazi. struck in Lahore, the Dar-ul-Saltanat, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</p> <p>(ii) The victorious Emperor Jahandar Shah, the valiant,<br/>Put his stamp on the sun and moon through the world,<br/>Struck in Shah Jahanabad, the capital in the first year of the auspicious reign.</p> <p>(iii) Farrukh Siyar, the monarch of the land and sea put his stamp on silver and gold through the grace of God.<br/>Struck in Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the second year of the auspicious reign.</p> |

Qutab-ud-Din Muhammad Muazzam Shah Alam Bahadur Shah was born in 1643 in the Deccan. His death took place at Lahore on 19 February 1712 in the fifth year of his reign. He obtained the title of *Khuld Manzil* after his demise.

Jahandar Shah, Muhammad Muz-ud-Din was born in 1660 in the Deccan. He died in 1713. He obtained the title of *Khuld Aramgah* after death.



Muhammad Farukh Siyar was born in 1686. He reigned for 6 years and 4 months. His death took place in 1719. He was given the title of *Shahidi Mahrum* after his demise.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Coins of<br/>Rafi-ul-Darajat,<br/>Rafi-ud-Daula,<br/>Muhammad<br/>Shah</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Rafi-ul-Darajat, the monarch of land and sea. Struck coin in India with thousands of blessings. Struck at Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the first year of the reign.</li> <li>(ii) The auspicious coin of the valiant king Shahjahan. Struck at Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the first year of auspicious reign.</li> <li>(iii) The fortunate coin of Muhammad Shah, the valiant king. Struck at Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

Shamas-ud-Din Abul Barakat Rafi-ul-Darajat died in 1718 and was buried in the mausoleum of Humayun.

Muhammad Shah, Abul Fatah, Roushan Akhtar, Nasir-ud-Din was born on 5 August 1702 in the neighbourhood of Ghazni. He died on 14 April 1748 at Delhi in the thirty-first year of his reign when he was 46 years of age. He was bestowed the title of *Firdaus Aramgah* after death.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Coins of<br/>(i) Ahmad Shah<br/>(ii) Alamgir II<br/>(iii) Shah Alam II<br/>and<br/>(iv) Akbar Shah</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The fortunate coin of Ahmad Shah Bahadur, the valiant king A.H. 1162. Struck at Lahore, the capital, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</li> <li>(ii) The king Aziz-ud-Din Alamgir. Struck coin in the seven climes like the luminous sun and moon, 1170.</li> <li>(iii) The shadow of God's mercy, the Defender of the religion of Muhammad, Shah Alam, the king put his stamp on the seven climes.</li> <li>(iv) The fortunate coin of the lord of second constellation, Muhammad Akbar, Badshah-i-Ghazi. Struck at Shah Jahanabad, the Darulkhilafat, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

Mojahid-ud-Din Abul Nasir Ahmad Shah was born in 1727. He died in 1775 and buried at Qadam Rasul in the environs of Delhi. Abul' Adl Az-ud-Din Muhammad Alamgir II was born in 1687. He

## INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINS OF MUSLIM KINGS

died on 11 November 1759 at the age of seventy-three. He was buried in the sepulchre of Humayun. Ali Gauhar Shah Alam II was born in 1727 at Allahabad. He died in 1807 at the age of eighty-one and was buried at Qutab Minar Delhi. He was bestowed with the title of *Firdaus Manzil* after his death. Abul Nasr Muin-ud-Din Akbar Shah II was born in 1759. He died in 1821 at the age of sixty-two. He was given the title of *Arsh Aramgah* after death.

Some specimens of inscriptions on coins of the Afghan kings may be enumerated here for the knowledge and interest of the readers.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Coins of</b></p> <p><b>(i) Nadar Shah,</b></p> <p><b>(ii) Ahmad Shah</b></p> <p><b>    Durrani,</b></p> <p><b>(iii) Tymur Shah,</b></p> <p><b>(iv) Shah Jaman</b></p> | <p>(i) The king of kings, the lord of constellation is Nadir, the head of the kings of the world. May God prolong his reign. Struck at Bhakhar, 1158.</p> <p>(ii) By the command of God, the inscrutable Ahmad, the king struck coin on silver and gold from the bottom of the sea to the height of the moon. Struck at Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The pearl of the age, Ahmad Shah, the king.</p> <p>(iii) By the command of God and the Prophet of the people the coin of Tymur Shah became current in the world, 1171. Struck at Lahore, the Dar-ul-Sultanat, in the first year of the auspicious reign.</p> <p>(iv) Through the grace of God, the Lord of both worlds coin became current in state in the name of Shah Zaman. Struck at Peshawar in the eighth year of the auspicious reign.</p> |
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# Cavalry of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

GULCHARAN SINGH\*

Before Maharaja Ranjit Singh appeared on the scene, the Khalsa army consisted entirely of horsemen. Saddle was their home. They were armed with matchlock and sabre. Everyone brought his own horse and a matchlock which was rewarded by protection and share in plunder.

The state of affairs then prevalent in the Panjab have been aptly described by Sita Ram Kohli thus : "The Sikh population of the Panjab was practically soldier to a man. The country under their possession at the time presented the appearance of a vast military camp, with a number of powerful Chiefs and Sardars, each having a large body of faithful retainers besides fairly good resources of men and material, at his command. The followers of a Chief claimed a share in the spoils of a conquest as a matter of right, and, in his corporate capacity, regarded himself as an equally true representative of the Khalsa."<sup>1</sup> The Maharaja had realized the low value of the irregular cavalry. So, he made efforts to convert them into a regular force, by training them on the western lines. For this, he employed a few European officers. Whenever he subdued a Chief he employed great tact, and instead of disbanding the Chief's forces he absorbed them lock, stock and barrel into his own and trained them too on western lines. He carried on with the granting of military fiefs, and abolishing them gradually. In this way he was able to raise regularly paid strong cavalry.

Subsequently, the Maharaja introduced new measures. His cavalry was divided into the following three categories :

- (a) Regular Cavalry.
- (b) Ghorchara Fauj.
- (c) Jagirdari Fauj.

These are discussed separately hereunder.

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1. *Maharaja Ranjit Singh Centenary Volume*, pp. 77-78.

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

### Regular Cavalry.

This force formed the smallest part of the Maharaja's cavalry. It was well disciplined and had the best in horses, men and equipment. The Cuirassiers and the Dragoons<sup>2</sup> were "a fine body of men in appearance and equipment no less than in drill and discipline."<sup>3</sup>

This force was trained and organised on the western lines by General Jean Francois Allard, a Frenchman employed by the Maharaja in March 1822. He was paid the "liberal" salary of Rupees 30,000 per annum. In 1822, there were only four trained regiments of cavalry; but by 1829 this number was increased four times.

Various foreign visitors to the Panjab who happened to see the Maharaja's cavalry have described it in their own way. A few descriptions are given below. Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, in a letter (dated 1st January, 1827) to Captain Wade, Political Assistant at Ludhiana, wrote :

"...While the Raja was at breakfast, two regiments of cavalry (about one thousand men in all) had arrived and taken up ground about two hundred yards in front. They were drawn up in line and after performing a few evolutions which were done very slowly, they marched round in review by threes. The men were dressed in red jackets and pantaloons. They also had red linen pugries (turbans). They were good looking men, and well mounted. The horses were also in good order. The first regiment had sabres and carbines slung in the usual manner along the right side and thigh. The 2nd Regiment was dressed and accounted in the same way, but instead of carbines they had matchlocks slung at their backs. The carbines and matchlocks were all made at Lahore. The Raja said there was a large manufactory of matchlocks at this place, from which they were exported in great quantities to other parts of Hindustan. The two regiments were commanded by a Mr Gordon, a half caste in Raja's service. He came up and saluted the Raja after the Review, and said something about the long arrears due to the men.

2. Dragoons were the heavy cavalry who would fight mounted; but, ordinarily, dismounted to fight. Horse being used for transportation. Motorised infantry of to-day could be said to be their successors.

3. *Centenary Volume*, p. 80.

He was told that pay would be issued soon."

Captain C.M. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, in his report dated 1st August 1827, to Sir C.T. Metcalfe, Resident, mentioned Allard's cavalry in these words :

"The Cavalry commanded by M. Allard consists of two regiments of Dragoons and one of lancers. One Regiment of Dragoons is armed with swords and carbines, the other with swords and matchlocks. The lancers with lances and swords. The carbines are slung with the muzzles upwards, the reverse of the mode adopted in the British army. The Dragoons are mostly Sikhs and wear the Sikh turban. The Lancers are chiefly Pathans from Hindustan who have been in the service of Holkar and Amir Khan. There are however two troops of Sikhs in that corps. The dress and equipment of the three regiments are uniform. The sword is slung by a waist belt. They wore white dress when I saw them, but they have woollen jackets for the cold season similar to that worn by Dragoons in the French service. The jacket of the Lancers is French grey with red facings, that of the Dragoons scarlet. The strength of each regiment is about 1,000 men. They are not well mounted nor, though intended as regular cavalry, in so efficient a state comparatively speaking as the infantry which is owing to the system of the Sawars providing their own horses and Raja's reluctance to incur the expense of M. Allard's suggestion for their perfect organisation."

Lieut. Barr, while on his way to Kabul, halted at Peshawar (March 1839) for a few days, and happened to see Allard's Dragoons. He gives the following description of their dress and arms :

"The trooper's dress is a red jacket (by no means new or of a bright colour), with broad facings of buff crossed in front by a pair of black belts, one of which supports a pouch, the other a bayonet. Round the waist, they wear a girdle, partially concealed by a sword-belt, to which a sabre with a brass hilt and leathern scabbard is suspended, and before the saddle is a small leathern receptacle for the butt of the carbine, which is so attached to the individual as to give it the appearance of being slung across the back. Their trousers are long, of dark blue cloth, with a red stripe; and thier turbans of crimson silk, brought somewhat into a peak in front, and ornamented in the centre with a small brass half-hoon, from which springs a glittering spring about

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

two inches in height. Their saddles are concealed by a crimson cloth edged with a border of blue-and-white stripes, and the harness is adorned with brass studs. The officers are attired from top to toe in bright crimson silk, and they merely carry a sabre attached to their person by an ornamented belt. Altogether, the appearance of the detachment was very creditable, and the men would look remarkably well if a better cloth was used for their jackets.”<sup>4</sup>

### Organisation and Strength

The cavalry regiments were from 100 to over 500 strong, and had in their ranks men of various creeds : Pathans, Dogras, Rajputs, Sikhs, etc.

Larger regiments were divided into Risalas (troops) and their strength varied from 150 to 200. The officer set-up was as for the infantry. Naturally, cavalry was paid more than infantry.

The strength of this force at various times of the Sikh rule was as under ;

Sambat A.D. year	Strength	Monthly Salary in rupees
1876 (1819 A.D.)	750	11,723
1880 (1823 A.D.)	1,656	41,609
1885 (1828 A.D.)	4,345	1,03,970
1890 (1833 A.D.)	3,914	86,544
1895 (1838 A.D.)	4,090	90,375
1900 (1843 A.D.)	5,381	1,61,660
1902 (1845 A.D.)	6,235	1,95,925

### Ghorchara Fauj

This force was mainly composed of the small forces taken away from the various small chieftains who had been subdued. For example, the forces of the Ramgarhia Misl and those of Sardar Milkha Singh Thehpuria of Rawalpindi, when taken over, were grouped into two big divisions called Derah Ramgarhia and the Derah Pindiwala respectively. The troops of the Nakkai and Kanhaiya Misls also met a similar fate, and were placed under Prince Kharak Singh and Prince Sher Singh respectively. (Incidentally the mothers of these Princes came from the respective Misls)

4. *Journal of a March from Delhi to Peshawar*, pp. 214-15.

### Organisation

Ghorcharas had little or no organisation, discipline or training of the regular cavalry. It was neither organised into regiments, nor was it placed under any chief command. They had their own *derahs*, each one of which was independent of the other. Each *derah* was commanded by a commander of an unspecified rank, assisted by one subordinate officer. In addition, each *derah* had :

- (a) A Vakil (munshi)
- (b) An Accountant (mutsaddi)
- (c) An Ensign (nishanchi)
- (d) A Chief drummer (dhaunsa nawaz)
- (e) A Granthi.

Each *derah* was divided into small groups (known as *misl*s) composed of "members of the same clan or of those who were otherwise more or less closely related to each other." Such groups were commanded by the heads of the respective clans, or by a daring member of the clan. There was no fixed strength or uniform of these small groups. Ghorcharas were armed with swords, spears and muskets.

In 1822, smaller *derahs* were grouped into larger divisions to facilitate administration and general control. These divisions were later commanded by such personalities as Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, Sandhawalia Sardars, Attariwala Sardars, Misr Diwan Chand, Jamadar Khushal Singh, with the Maharaja himself being the supreme. Whatever may be the reasons for adopting such an organisation, it nevertheless lacked the principle of co-operation and the economy of effort which, consequently, leads to lack of concentration of a force when required.

It seems to have been a multi racial organisation, because almost every military class of the Panjab was represented in this force. There were the Jat Sikhs, the Hindu Rajputs from Jammu and Kangra, Muslim Rajputs from the area now covered by the districts of Sargodha and Jehlam, and from Gujar Khan in Pakistan the latter provided the largest number for this force. There was also a sprinkling of Pathans, Khattris and Datta Brahmins.

This force was divided into the following two divisions :

- (a) **Ghorchara Khas**  
Consisted of only one regiment comprised of nobility.
- (b) **Misldar Sowars**  
As already stated above, it belonged to the various chieftains, who, having been beaten, owed allegiance to the Maharaja.

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

### Pay and Strength

They were paid by the state government. To start with they were paid in the shape of jagirs valuing from Rs. 400 to 600 a year. This practice was replaced by cash payments as under :

- (a) A trooper getting Rs. 253.00 to Rs 300.00 a year.
- (b) A sowar received Rs. 22 to 26 per month.

The trooper was required to provide himself with his own horse and equipment. In case he was unable to do this when entering the service, he was provided with the necessary equipment on Government expense, made good by the trooper by easy instalments. The usual deductions for the various items were as under :

- (a) For the horse Rs. 100.00
- (b) For the matchlock Rs. 16.00 to Rs. 20.00
- (c) For the sword Rs. 10.00

A precondition was that the horse must be strong and well fed. A lean horse was not accepted for service. The trooper had either to procure a good new horse; or pay Rs. 10.00 per month for the lean one until the animal became fit for service. In the case of an horse's death the trooper drew a foot soldier's pay till he provided himself with a fresh horse.

The strength and their annual cost at various times was as under :

Year	Strength	Annual salary
1870 (1813 A.D.)	374	Rs. 1,65,117
1874 (1817 A.D.)	2,464	Rs. 2,78,318
1876 (1819 A.D.)	3,577	Rs. 11,13,782
1880 (1823 A.D.)	7,300	Rs. 22,45,000
1885 (1828 A.D.)	7,200	Rs. 21,94,000
1895 (1838 A.D.)	10,795	Rs. 31,68,714
1900 (1843 A.D.)	14,384	Rs. 44,18,840
1902 (1845 A.D.)	19,100	Rs. 58,27,597

Burnes estimated the Ghorchara strength at 50,000. He further writes ;

"A regular muster of these forces is exacted, with a few favoured exceptions and as a native soldiery, they are an efficient, well mounted, and serviceable body. Their superiority is said to insist in being easily rallied while their neighbours, the Afghans,



Terminate a battle with the first discomfiture.<sup>5</sup>

Baron Hugel, an Austrian traveller, writes about the Ghorcharas in these words :

"I requested leave to inspect them, and never beheld a finer nor a more remarkably striking body of men. Each one was dressed differently, and yet so much in the same fashion, that they all looked in perfect keeping."

"The handsome Raja Suchet Singh was in similar costume, and reminded me of the time when the fate of empires hung on the point of a lance, and when the individual whose bold heart beat fearlessly under his steel breastplate, was the sole founder of his fortunes. The strange troop before me was most peculiarly Indian. The uniform consisted of a velvet coat or gaberdine, over which most of them wore a shirt of mail. Others had this shirt made to form a part of the tunic. A belt round the waist, richly embroidered in gold, supported the powder-horn, covered with cloth of gold, as well as the Persian *katar* and the pistol which many of them carried in addition to those weapons. Some wore a steel helmet, inlaid with gold, and surmounted with *kalga* or black heron's plume, others wore a cap of steel, worked like a cuirass in rings : this cap lies firmly on the turban, and covers the whole head, having openings for the eyes. The left arm is often covered from the hand to the elbow with a steel cuff inlaid with gold. The round Sikh shield hangs at the back, fastened with straps across the chest, a quiver at the right side and a bow slung at the back being carried as part of the equipment, a bag made in the belt holds the balls, and a tail bayonet, frequently ornamented with gold, held in the right hand when the man is on foot, and carried over the shoulder when in the saddle, completes the dress.... It is a strange sight to a European to see their slippers embroidered in gold covering their naked feet. Few among them wear high jack boots."<sup>6</sup>

The Ghorcharas forming the bodyguard of the Maharaja were always "splendidly dressed in chain armour and thick quilted jackets made of rich silk, of all the colours of the rainbow."<sup>7</sup> Looking at Ranjit Singh's Ghorcharas lined up far two and a half miles at Amritsar on 10th December 1838 which he thought his bodyguard, Emily Eden wrote :

"The sun was up and shining then, and I suppose there was

5. Alexander Burnes, *Travels in to Bokhara*, p. 289.

6. Hugel, *Travels in Cashmir and the Panjab* (Translated by Maj T. B. Jervis, 1845), pp. 330-31.

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

not one who would not have made the fortune of a painter. One troop was dressed entirely in yellow satin, with gold scarfs and showls; but the other half were in that cloth of gold which is called kimcob—the fond being gold and the pattern scarlet, or purple, or yellow; their arms were all gold—many of them had collars of precious stones, their shields and lances were all studded with gold. They have long beards down to their waists, and most of them had a silver or gold tissue rapery, which they bring over their heads and pass round their beards to keep them from the dust.”<sup>8</sup>

### Charyari

This was the largest group of Ghorcharas, and was known as Charyari Rasala on account of the four handsome jawans it had were great friends lived together. They were, S. Bhup Singh, S. Chet Singh, S. Ram Singh and S. Hardas Singh Bania; and Maharaja Ranjit Singh liked them very much.

They were cantoned at Nao Lakha (Lahore) and were about 4,192 in 1845 A.D.<sup>9</sup>

Kavi Ganesh Das has mentioned in his *chhands*, the valour of Hardas Singh, in a few battles.<sup>10</sup>

### Jagirdari Cavalry

This was the force maintained by landlords, Jagirdars or fief-holders as the name implies. Lepel Griffin has described this element in these words :

“These were the picturesque element in the Maharaja’s reviews. Many of the men were well-to-do country gentlemen, the sons, relations, or clansmen of the chiefs who placed them in the field and maintained them there, and whose personal credit was concerned in their splendid appearance. There was no uniformity in their dress. Some wore a shirt of mail, with a helmet inlaid with gold and a *kalgi* or heron’s plume; others wore gay with the many coloured splendours of velvet and silk, with pink or yellow muslin turbans, and gold embroidered belts carrying their sword and powder horn. All wore, at the back, the small round shield of tough buffalo hide. These magnificent horsemen were armed some with bows and arrows, but the majority with match locks, with which they made excellent practice.”<sup>11</sup>

7. Osborne, *The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh*, p. 25.

8. Emily Eden, *Up the Country*, Vol. II, p. 4.

9. *Khalsa Darbar Records*, Vol. I, p. 114.

10. *Fateh Nama Guru Khalsa*, pp. 217 and 224.

11. Lepel Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, pp. 143-44.

This system bound a fief-holder to supply a certain number of efficient and well equipped troopers whenever required by the State. The strength required to be maintained by each jagirdar for this purpose depended upon the value of his jagir. They were, also, required to present themselves with their troops for review on Dussehra festival when a general parade of the entire army was held either at Amritsar or at Lahore, and the National Flag of saffron colour was hoisted. The descriptive-rolls of the troopers of each jagirdars were deposited in the State's Record Office.

It was obligatory for everyone from the highest ranking officer to the lowest rank to be present at these parades. A strict check was carried out and the absentees were punished. Serious notice was also taken of the discrepancies, if any, found in these descriptive rolls. Through these checks the Maharaja kept a control "over the retainers of his chiefs as well as their steeds."

Non-fulfilment of the conditions was punished. Even a Sardar like General Hari Singh Nalwa was not spared. It is stated that the Sardar had once failed to maintain the stipulated number of men, for which he was fined a sum of Rupees two lakhs.<sup>12</sup> Such measures were an effective check against corruption by the jagirdars. The compliance with these conditions was a prerequisite for the renewal or enhancement of jagirs.

As regards the strength of this force it has not possible to accurately determine, which, due to the varying types of controls and small groups, is a very difficult problem.

#### **Maharaja's Love for Horses**

The Maharaja had a great love for horses. He used to purchase horses worth about Rupees twenty-five thousand every year. There were about a thousand horses reserved for the personal use of the Maharaja. A number of these were through bred Arab horses, and some were of Persian breed. His most favourites were : *Gauhor bar*, *Sufaid pari* and *Laili*. Baron Charles Hugel, an Austrian traveller gives us the following account of the Maharaja's horses :

"But what particularly attracted me, was the sight of the Maharaja's favourite horses, drawn up between the tents and the troops, twentyfive or thirty in number. The breed in the Panjab is very peculiar, and not unlike that of Spain, but with straighter noses. The animals are large, and their movements are very gentle; they may be trained to execute the most graceful

12. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, daftar II, p. 379.

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

curvettings, and the Sikhs value them according to their proficiency in their movements."<sup>13</sup> As to the appearance of these horses he notes that "these animals present a beautiful appearance, with their small bones, flowing mane and tail, and their proud and fiery action and lofty heads. The bridle, saddle and other ornaments of these creatures are most costly. The first is overlaid with gold or enamel, and at the top of the head, or else on either side, waves a plume of heron's feathers: strings of jewels are hung round the neck under which are the *Sulimans* or Onyx stones. The saddle is also of enamel or gold, covered with precious stones, the pommel being particularly rich. The housings are of Kashmiri Shawls, fringed with gold; the crupper and martingale ornamented very highly and on each side of the favourite hangs the tail of the Tibetan yak, dyed of various hues."<sup>14</sup>

Another characteristic description of the same subject is given by Honourable Miss Emily Eden in these words :

"The jewelled trappings of the Horses were of the most costly description, the jewels being chiefly emeralds of immense size and value hanging round the neck, covering the forehead, and fastened on the front of the saddle. The jewels and ornaments were said to have been worth above £ 3,00,000. The Maharaja was passionately fond of horses and he would make war on a Province to procure the surrender of any which were reputed of peculiarly pure breed.<sup>15</sup> He kept them, highly fed, in large numbers, and was almost in the daily habit of inspecting them; adorning them on occasions of particular display, with the finest jewels of his Treasury, including the celebrated large diamond, called Koh-i-Noor or Mountain of Light."<sup>16</sup>

### Training

General Allard, who joined the service of Ranjit Singh in 1822, was given the task of re-organising and training the Maharaja's

13. Huegel. *op.cit.*, p. 301.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-02.

15. This statement is incorrect. Even for the procurement of La'li, there is a misconception that the Maharaja had to launch a number of expeditions for this animal which cost him Rs. 60,000 and about 12,000 soldiers. Faqir Syed Waheeduddin's book *The Real Ranjit Singh* is based on his family archives, hence it can be taken as authentic. In it, the Faqir states that no operations were ever launched specifically for the procurement of any horse.

16. Miss Eden, *Portraits of the Princes and People of India* (1844), p. 14.

cavalry on modern western lines. For this purpose, he brought with him a pamphlet from his homeland : France.

### Ghorcharas

The Ghorcharas did not like these new methods of training which they referred to as "the tricks of a dancing girl," and strongly protested against the new methods. So, the Maharaja had to resort to new recruitment for this purpose. The tactics employed by Ghorcharas, who were pastmasters in riding, were to over-power their foe with a cavalry charge launched with dash and reckless courage. "When the horse is in motion," writes Steinbach, "the legs and arms of the rider wave backwards and forwards, right and left, by way, as it were, of keeping time the pace of the animal best ridden."<sup>17</sup> These were composed of "fine body of intrepid and resourceful horsemen," and played conspicuous part in the conquest of Jammu, Kangra, Multan and Kashmir. During the Sikh wars, the Ghorcharas played a significant part and were able to harass the enemy considerably.

### Regular cavalry

Lieutenant Barr, who had the opportunity of witnessing a review of the Lahore cavalry at Peshwar on 1st April 1839, writes :

"The effect of the sun glistening on the cuirassier's casques and breast plates as they were advancing was extremely pretty; and the regularity and order in which they walked by, could scarcely be exceeded by the Company's cavalry."<sup>18</sup>

And "in the field the conduct of the Sikh cavalry has generally corresponded with their appearance and efficiency."<sup>19</sup>

The Maharaja's cavalry could move faster than the Mughal or Maratha cavalry.

But, the common impression of all onlookers had been that the standard of Lahore cavalry, as compared to its infantry or artillery, was low. Here is what Osborne, who had an opportunity to see two squadrons of General Allard's cavalry on 24th June 1838, noted in his diary that day :

"I was much disappointed in their appearance. They do not look to advantage by the side of their infantry. They are men of all ages, ill-looking, ill-dressed, and worse mounted; neither

17. Steinbach, *The Panjab*, p. 65.

18. *Journal*, p. 247.

19. Steinbach, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

## CAVALRY OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

in appearance nor in reality are they to be compared to the infantry soldiers of the Panjab."<sup>20</sup>

The main reason for this low standard of cavalry has been assigned to the Maharaja's indifference towards this arm. As regards recruitment, Osborne observed :

"Ranjit Singh personally inspects every recruit for his infantry, whilst the cavalry is generally recruited from the followers of the different Sardars, and most of them owe their appointments to favour and interest, more than to their fitness and capability."<sup>21</sup>

The same observer writing from the financial point of view says :

"The raising of the regular cavalry was entrusted to General Allard, a French Officer; but from all I can hear his intentions have been so thwarted, and his means so limited, by the parsimony of the Maharaja, that the same success has not attended his efforts with the cavalry which General Ventura appears to have met with the infantry."<sup>22</sup>

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20. *Osborne, op. cit.*, p. 61.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

# Superstitions during the Kingdom of Lahore

MRS. SURINDER KAUR\*

Superstition is an idea, practice etc. founded on belief in magic, with crafts, *amulets*, and so on. During the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, superstitions of divergent hues prevailed in all ranks of society, from the ruler to the ruled. These were so inextricably woven round the people that their presence was visible from cradle to one's grave. The social ceremonies, pilgrimage or an army expedition was preceded by consultations with a *pandit* who predicted the auspicious moments for commencing an undertaking. In fact, superstitions were a queer amalgam of omens, ill-omens, charms amulets, propitious and unpropitious moments.

## Omens and Ill-omens

Sneezing while going out or while starting a journey was considered a bad sign and in the event of failure in the mission, it was attributed to sneezing.<sup>1</sup>

Certain birds were also considered harbinger of either luck or misfortune. Partridge was considered lucky bird as it warded off the evil eye. To hear a partridge's call on one's right while entering a town or village, was a bad omen, and a good omen if heard on the left side.<sup>2</sup> An owl signified desolation, and was despised,<sup>3</sup> so was *keel*. Passing of crow and black buck from left to right on one's way was a good omen.<sup>4</sup> The crowing of a crow on the roof implied the arrival of a guest.

## Animals and Lower Animals

Cows and buffalos were also associated with good and bad signs. Looking into cow's face immediately after rising from the bed, was

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1. R.C. Temple, *Legends of the Punjab*, I, Bombay, 1884, p. 101.

2. H.T. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, 1834, rpt. Patiala, 1977, p. 193.

3. Denzil Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes*, 1916, Patiala, 1970, p. 118.

4. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

## SUPERSTITIONS DURING THE KINGDOM OF LAHORE

a good omen. To avoid the calving cow from drying up before the usual period, its first milk was offered to a *Brahmin*. To feed a cow was considered a meritorious act. And to let a cow die with rope round its neck was a sin which had to be atoned by giving offerings to the *Brahmin* to the value of the dead and also by undertaking a pilgrimage to the Ganga to wash off the sin.<sup>5</sup> If a man, while starting a journey, saw someone riding a buffalo, he returned as it was a bad omen. To hear a female jackal howling and a dog groaning in the night was a bad omen.<sup>6</sup> If in the morning a man saw a dog shaking its ears, it was looked upon as an evil sign and meant ill luck would befall him before night.<sup>7</sup> Seeing a dog while starting the journey also signified something amiss and the person would beat a hasty retreat.

If one countenanced a snake slithering from right to left, it was a good omen for going ahead with journey.<sup>8</sup> If the shadow of a pregnant woman fell on the snake it became instantly blind.<sup>9</sup> To hear a jackass braying while entering a town, a Hindu's mare foaling during day time, cows, buffalos and horses getting on the roof of the house were considered bad omens.<sup>10</sup>

To feed ants daily with flour and sugar or *till* (sesame) and *chawal* (rice) was an act of great merit. So was the feeding of fish with pills of flour. Watering a *pipal* tree was considered propitious for abundance of wealth and other bounties.

### Units of Time

A cow calving in *Bhadon* (August-September), a buffalo in *Magh* (January-February) and a mare foaling in *Sawan* (July-August) were considered unlucky. Their off-spring if not sold to a Muslim was given by way of charity to a *Brahmin*.<sup>11</sup> Ploughing in *Jeth* (May-June) was deemed unlucky, so was the birth of a child in *Kartik* (October-November). The Hindus in hills never performed marriages in *Poh* (December-January), *Chet* (March-April), *Bhadon* (August-September) and *Asoj* (September-October). The Muslims never solemnised marriages and undertook no work of importance in the month of *Muharram* and *Ramzan*.

5. R.C. Temple, *op. cit.*, I, p. 131.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

7. H.T. Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

8. R.C. Temple, I, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

9. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

10. *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 48; *Hoshiarpur District Settlement Report*, 1879-84, p. 36.

11. *Jullundur District Gazetteer*, 1904, p. 131.



Not only months, there were certain taboo days for the people. Both the Hindus and Muslims refrained from buying or selling cattle, *ghi* and leather etc. on Saturdays, Sundays and Tuesdays. A cattle dying on any of these unlucky days was buried, not given to the menials. Lending and borrowing of money was forbidden, and shaving on these days led to the death of self or a son.<sup>12</sup> A sugar-press was always started on Sunday as well as dug on the same day. Ploughing or sowing was begun on Wednesday and never on Mondays or Saturdays, reaping always commenced on Tuesday. The first and eleventh day of any month was inauspicious for sowing or ploughing.

Superstitious beliefs were evident in the birth of infants. If a boy was born, a net was hung over the doorway, a charm stuck over the wall and a fire lighted in the threshold and kept burning day and night to ward off the evil spirits. On the night of the sixth day the whole household sat up and watched over the child, for on that day his destiny was determined, especially as to immunity from small-pox. These precautions were, however, conspicuous by their absence in case of birth of a daughter.<sup>13</sup> A son born after three girls in succession was not supposed to live long, but this was not the case with the girl born after three sons.<sup>14</sup>

People were so steeped in credulity that even diseases were viewed as visitations for their sins in previous life. Instead of seeking the help of apothecaries, the people sought relief in *mantras* and prayers. In 1827 when cholera was rampant in Lahore and Amritsar, a considerable amount of money was spent by Maharaja Ranjit Singh among the poor and Brahmins of these two cities to drive away the disease.<sup>15</sup> Again in June 1839 when the Maharaja fell ill, Pandit Madhusudan was ordered to engage fifty Brahmins at Rs. 2/- per head per day to pray for the recovery of the Maharaja. Hakim Naru-ud-Din distributed ten *maunds* of bread among the poor beggars everyday until the recovery of the Maharaja.<sup>16</sup>

Superstitions in the hills had their worst play. If a person of rank and power fell ill and his disease did not yield to medicine, search was made for an old woman with feet turned inwards. She was accused of being a witch or *dain*, the cause of the trouble. Either her nose was

12. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

14. *Lec. cit.*,

15. *Jam-i-Jahan Numa*, Calcutta, 5 and 12 September, 1827.

16. *Panjab Akhbar*, 4 June, 1839, p. 174.

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chopped off or she was branded on the forehead with a red-hot copper coin or sometime she was put to death.<sup>17</sup>

Amulets called *tawiz* were worn by the superstitious people either round the neck or on arms to get rid of the disease they were afflicted with. In Bannu district every individual wore about a dozen amulets round his neck and arms.<sup>18</sup>

### Planetary Influence

The credulous people were also afflicted by the movement of benign and malignant stars. A child born under an inauspicious star was regarded unlucky. Marriages and other ceremonies were performed after consultations with the astrologers.

The *dumdar tara* or a tailed star was dreaded of all. It portended epidemic or famine. On the appearance of the comet subscriptions were raised and the Brahmins and mendicants fed. *Vigne* records the loss he suffered after seeing *dumdar tara*.<sup>19</sup>

### Other Occult Practices

Especially in hills people firmly believed in magic or *jadu*. It was of two types, white and black. The white magic was used to promote the interests of the community, for instance in rain-making or warding off epidemic. Black magic was an offence against the community.<sup>20</sup>

Mesmerism was also practiced to discover the cause of certain troubles or ailments. A specific *kalma* was read as the person got into a mesmeric state and started talking incoherently. The person was then questioned on the particular problem regarding which the information was required and he gave replies accordingly.<sup>21</sup>

As mentioned in the preceding pages, the illiterate people particularly in hills had firm faith in witches, commonly known as *dains* who, they thought, envied the prosperity of her neighbours, mostly the possession of male heir. It was the belief of the people that she could cause the death of a human being or cattle by magically eating their livers, blast the crops, bring disease, stop milk of milch cattle and that she could destroy the efficiency of religious rites.<sup>22</sup> In order to put witches to a test, it was customary among the hill people to take them

17. G.T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir and Ladakh*, Vol. I, London, 1842, p. 197.

18. National Archives of India : Foreign Dept. Secret Consultations, 29 May, 1847, Nos. 128-32.

19. G.T. Vigne, *op. cit.*, p. 391.

20. W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, London, 1907, p. 248.

21. *Mianwali District Gazetteer*, 1915, p. 81.

22. W. Moorcroft and G. Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces from 1819-25, 1837*, rpt. Punjab Languages Department, Patiala, 1970, p. 124.

to the two lakes, one called *Debel Devi* and the other known as *Vishnu Devi*, where after tying millstones round their necks they were thrown in water. In the event of drowning they were accounted impostors. If they swam, their claim to with craft was confirmed.<sup>23</sup>

Such was the stuff the subjects of Maharaja Ranjit Singh were made of. The Maharaja and his successors were equally superstitious and believed in omens, auspicious and inauspicious moments, consulted astrologers before embarking on an important undertaking. In 1815 the Maharaja chose *Basant Panchami* for his departure to Amritsar only after consulting his astrologer.<sup>24</sup> Again in 1831 the Maharaja consulted the astrologers before meeting Lord William Bentick at Repar and adopted a strategy suggested by them.<sup>25</sup> In 1833 when the Maharaja fell ill, some people brought amulets to be worn by him.<sup>26</sup> Another practice usually resorted to by the Maharaja, before starting upon an important undertaking, was to order two slips of paper to be placed before the holy Granth. On one slip was written the object of his wish, while the other had the reverse of its written on it. A little boy or a *granthi* took out one of the slips without looking at it. If it was the one having the object of his wish, the Maharaja exuded confidence before launching the action, otherwise the proposed action was abandoned.<sup>26</sup> The Maharaja once put two slips before the holy Granth in order to ascertain whether he should bathe with warm water or cold water. The slip with the inscription of 'cold water' came out, and the Maharaja acted accordingly.<sup>27</sup>

In 1843 one of the wives of Maharaja Sher Singh gave birth to a son. The Maharaja consulted Pandit Madhusudan regarding fortune of the boy. It was predicted that the child was born under an inauspicious star and would bring ruin to the family. The prediction turned out to be true as Maharaja Sher Singh and his son Pratab Singh were killed by the Sandhawalia chiefs, and his widow became a *sati*. In 1847 Sardar Lehna Singh introduced a *pandit* from Banaras to Maharani Jindan who asked him about the future of Maharaja Dalip Singh and her brother. The answers being favourable, Maharani Jindan presented Rs. 2,000/- and a *khilat* to the *pandit*.<sup>28</sup>

23. N.A.I. : Foreign Dept. Misc. Volume, pp. 206, 213.

24. Diwan Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*, ed. S.R. Kohli, Lahore, 1928, pp., 207-08.

25. *Ibid*, p. 224.

26. Ali-ud-din, *Ibratnama*, 1854, pp. 422, 722.

27. S.L. Suri, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar III, Part I (ed. V.S. Suri), 1885, rpt. New Delhi, 1962, p. 502.

28. N.A.I. and Foreign Dept. Secret Consultations, 26 June, 1847, Nos. 170-74.

## Popular Reaction to the Occupation of Punjab Hill States by The English East India Company : A Study of the Ballads Regarding the Exploits of Ram Singh Pathania

RAJASBIR SINGH\*

The life and exploits of Ram Singh Pathania (1828-1858), the son of Shiam Singh, Wazir of Raja Bir Singh (1789-1846) of Nurpur, generated a rich literature in the Kangri and Dogri languages.<sup>1</sup> This literature delineates the reaction of the common people against the British occupation of the hill states. After the first Anglo-Sikh War of 1845-46, the English East India Company occupied the *Bist* Jalandhar *Doab* and the hill states of the Kangra Circle. In the second Anglo-Sikh War of 1848-49, the hill states like Kangra, Jaswan, Datarpur and Nurpur revolted against the Company's rule.<sup>2</sup>

Ram Singh Pathania rose in rebellion in August 1848, and occupied the fort of Shahpur Kandi. He declared Jaswant Singh, the minor son of the Late Raja Bir Singh, to be the king of Nurpur and became his *wazir*. G. C. Barnes, the settlement officer of Kangra, attacked Shahpur and compelled Ram Singh to vacate the fort. Ram Singh retired into the hills of Nurpur, but he had to face another defeat. In January 1849, he was able to get support from the Sikh army. He met the British forces at Dalle di Dhar under Brigadier General Wheeler. A fierce battle ensued which resulted in the death of Lieutenant J. Peel and Cornot Christie. Ram Singh was defeated and arrested. He was deported to Singapore where he died in 1858.<sup>3</sup>

There are six folk ballads on the revolt of Ram Singh Pathania, popular in the Kangra-Jammu hill tract. J. F. Mitchell and

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1. Chakardhari Shastri, "Shahid Wazir Ram Singh Pathania", *Shiraja*, J & K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Jammu, Vol 21 (1984), p.p. 46-48.
2. Hutchison & Vogel, *History of the Panjab Hill States*, Dept. of Languages and Culture, Himachal Pradesh, Simla, 1982 (reprint), Vol. I, pp. 87-88.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 266.

T. Grahame Bailey published a ballad entitled "The Ballad of Ram Singh's Two Rebellions" in 1920.<sup>4</sup> In fact the published ballad consists of two *vars* which treat the same subject in a different manner. M. S. Randhawa has reproduced these two ballads as one in a Gurmukhi version.<sup>5</sup> Randhawa's book also contains two other ballads.<sup>6</sup> Two more ballads are recorded by Chakardhari Shashtri of Jammu, which appeared in the *Shiraja* in Dogri.<sup>7</sup>

According to the first ballad, Ram Singh, son of Shiama (Shiam Singh) was an *avatar*. In order to save the honour of the Rajputs, he fought splendidly against the East India Company. A *parwana* was sent to him by the company ordering him not to fight against the English. Ram Singh did not listen to their dictation and sent the reply that he would fight against them. The ballad states that he had to fight all alone. The English army included troops from Calcutta. Ram Singh came up by the way of Basa (south-east of Juch), while the English advanced from Suriali (8 miles north of Juch). The first battle was fought at Juch. Ram Singh fought well but he was defeated.

The East India Company again threatened him but he stuck to his determination. He sought help from his maternal uncles Jawahar Singh and Bahadur Singh, and from the Kotwal named Das (of Dhar Bhol Taluqa in the south-west of Juch), Dhian/Jarial and Amar Singh Minhas. He fought well but was captured as the result of betrayal by a Brahmin.

The second ballad expresses the determination of Ram Singh, an *avatar*, to fight against the English. On his request, Das Kotwal from Bhol, Jangi Padhwal and Tara Singh Sahib came forward to help him whereas Nahangi Dhanotia refused to support him. Amar Singh Minhas not only extended help but also destroyed four regiments of the British. The ballad says that Ram Singh moved his camp to Nagabari, 4 miles west of Juch. He then moved to Shahpur and plundered the city. Interestingly, the ballad refers to Malmal and Chandi who attacked Ram Singh. According to Mitchell and Bailey, they represent Lt. John Peel and C. Christie, respectively.<sup>8</sup> In the fight, Malmal was wounded and Chandi was

4. *Journal of Punjab Historical Society*, Lahore, 1982, pp. 206-12.

5. M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra : Kala, Lok Te Geet*, New Delhi; 1976, pp. 385-90.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 390-95.

7. Chakardhari Shastri, *op.cit.*, pp. 49-50.

8. "The Ballad of Ram Singh's Two Rebellions," *The Panjab Past and Present*, Punjabi University, Patiala, Vol. 5, Part I (April 1971), p. 77.

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killed. The East India Company threatened Ram Singh that if he did not desist from fighting his home would be auctioned. On his refusal, he was attacked. A reward of two thousand rupees was fixed for Ram Singh's capture. A Brahmin betrayed him; consequently he was captured. He was brought to Nurpur and his father was informed of his capture.

The third ballad also considers Ram Singh as an *avtar* who fought against the English. It states that Ram Singh's mother Indori forbade him to fight against the English but he stuck to his aim. He did not care for his beautiful wives. He sought help from his brotherhood. Bahadur Singh, his maternal uncle, was asked to save Nurpur from the clutches of the Company. In the first battle, he captured Basa and then, Thora da fal. He was attacked by Barnes Sahib (G.C. Barnes, the settlement officer of Kangra). Kangra and Shahpur were offered to him, but he did not accept. Then, a great battle ensued in which Ram Singh fought valiantly.

The fourth ballad refers to the battles of Ram Singh when he camped in the forest of Bini. He sent *parwanas* to the kings of Kangra, Nadaun, Dada and Guler in order to seek their help, but in vain. Ram Singh had to fight all alone against the English. The ballad also refers to the attack by Barnes Sahib and the offer of the *jagir* of Kangra and Shahpur, which Ram Singh refused to accept. It also mentions the putting up of the camp by Ram Singh at Basa and Thoru and then at Naga Bari. According to the ballad he looted the post of Mamuna, set Datar Runiar on fire and encamped at Dhariari. Fina Singh and Suchet Singh refused to help him and he fought alone against the enemy.

There are two short ballads which carry almost the same events. According to these, Ram Singh, son of Shiama, was an *avtar* who fought alone against the English. He is said to have killed four of the platoons. He was not helped by the king.

Before compilation, the *vars* were in oral tradition. They remained preserved in the memory of the people for generations. Though the period of their composition is not known, yet it may be guessed on the basis of internal evidence. The ballads indicate that the folk mind had recognised the English sovereignty. No doubt, the bravery of Ram Singh is eulogized but the might of the English is also acknowledged. The English can put the house of Ram Singh on auction. They can even put him into a cage. Ram Singh is appreciated much for his strong determination and bravery, but he is regarded as a rebel. So it may be presumed that these ballads were

composed at a period when the British rule was fully established. At the same time, all the ballads refer to the Company. It may be deduced that these ballads came into currency before 1858, or only a little later.

In the ballads, Ram Singh is conceived as a hero with a strong determination. His mother's advice and his love for his beautiful wives do not change his mind. His greatness, according to these ballads, lies in his selfless dedication. The offer of Shahpur and Kangra does not bear fruit. Even threats could not stop him from fulfilling his aim. He is said to have fought all alone against the English. Though he sought help from the other states, yet nobody dared to give him a helping hand. Interestingly, a duel between Ram Singh and a British military officer is also shown to have taken place in which he killed one of the officers and injured the other. Ram Singh is depicted as a hero who struggled individually. This determination to continue struggle against the established English rule elevates him to the level of an *avtar*.

The ballads do not dwell on the defeat of Ram Singh. His failure is shown as the result of deception by a Brahmin. It was his misfortune. These are medieval modes of reconciliation with defeat.

The tone of the ballads also suggests that the English rule dominated the mind of the people. There is also the suggestion that in the popular mind there was an appreciation for the dominant British. A contemporary ballad called *Dekho Tamasha Barane Da* appreciated the peaceful administration of the English. It is also stated that during the English rule *jagirs* were freely given to kings and the other people.<sup>9</sup>

Ram Singh is appreciated for his bravery, selflessness and resolute determination, without any reference to his purpose of installing Jaswant Singh at Nurpur with himself as the *wazir*. While most of the chiefs quietly resigned to British supremacy and control, only a few individuals resisted.<sup>10</sup> Even the ballads do not portray the man like Ram Singh as having been inspired by patriotism, local or regional.

The ambivalence of the ballads is significant. The people loved their hero, but they also mutely accepted the better administration of the British.

9. M.S. Randhawa, *op. cit.*, pp. 408-09; *Journal of Panjab Historical Society*, pp. 215-16.

10. Hutchison and Vogel, *History of the Panjab Hill States*, Lahore, 1993, pp. 207, 211.

# Notes on the Anjuman-i-Punjab, Aligarh Movement, Brahmo Samaj, Indian Association, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha in the Context of Colonial Education in the Punjab, 1865-1885

NAZER SINGH\*

Anjuman-i-Isha 'at-Alumi-i-Mufida, Punjab popularly called the Anjuman-i-Punjab was formed by G.W. Leitner, the newly appointed Principal of the Government College, Lahore, in January 1865.<sup>1</sup> It was to be an educational and literary society. However, under the Presidentship of Leitner, it acquired a character embracing a variety of roles in the public life of not only the city of Lahore but also that of the entire region. It opened its branches in cities like Kasur, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Hissar and Amritsar. The Anjuman had different committees to look after its work in the different spheres. Its three important committees were :

1. The library committee whose two most important achievements were (a) the establishment of a public library in Lahore, (b) the literary revival and the creation of Punjab

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In this paper the author has traced the genesis and growth of the so called socio-religious movements to the educational policy of the British Empire in India. In fact, it has been given to understand that the educational policy of the British provided an organic unity to all these regionally and socially diverse movements. As the title of the paper suggests, it is narrative in the form of notes taken from the sources some of which have been rarely tapped for the perusal of the researchers in the field. —G.S.N.

1. See, Nazer Singh, "Anjuman-i-Isha't-i-'Alum-i-Mufida, Punjab : 1865-77," *Proceedings Punjab History Conference* (October 1982), pp. 135-41; and "Anjuman-i-Isha'at-i-Alumi-i-Mufida, Punjab : 1877-87", *Proceedings Punjab History Conference* (December, 1983), pp. 116-27.



Book Depot to translate European works into Indian vernaculars.

2. The educational committee whose single most achievement was the establishment of Punjab University, and its Senate which was practically a board of education for the Province of Punjab.
3. The medical committee aimed at the popularization of indigenous system of medicine.

The Anjuman gave birth to two distinct but inter-dependent movements, namely, (i) a literary movement for revival and improvement of ancient and classical studies by the traditional Indian scholars trained in modern methods of criticism and imbibed in the spirit of modern European civilization, and (ii) 'Orient Movement' aimed at the establishment of an Oriental University; for a scheme of education providing (a) encouragement to the vernaculars of India by making them the medium of instruction for the European sciences; (b) creation of modern literature in the vernaculars through the translation of European and western works made under aegis of the University functioning in close touch with the Anjuman, and (c) a more popular indigenous character to the existing system of education (as practised by the Calcutta University) through the association of natural leaders (the chiefs, the leading zamindars, the priests and the rich merchants etc.) with the education department by giving them representation on the management of educational institutions. It was to help in making education 'national.' This was because, first, there would be Indian participation in the educational enterprise; and secondly, the recognition of the worth of Indian languages, literature and the thought enshrined in them, as well as the association of the scholarly classes of India such as the Pandits and the Maulvies with the task of cultural regeneration was to bridge the cultural-political gap not only between the British rulers and the Indians but also between educated Indians and their vast illiterate fellow-countrymen.

Soon, the Anjuman became popular with the Europeans, both officials and non-officials, as well as the leading Panjabis. Under the patronage of Donald McLeod, the Punjab Lieutenant-Governor, it got the active support of officials like Aitchison and L. Griffin, Pandit Manphool and Harsukh Rai. The latter two were the Extra-Assistant Commissioners under the Government of Punjab. This official recognition gave the Anjuman a considerable significance in the eyes of Punjab Chiefs who donated lavishly for its University scheme. By 1867-68, the Anjuman under the dynamic leadership of Leitner had

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raised a fund of rupees 80,000. This led to the establishment of the Panjab University College Lahore in 1869. This college was a Senate responsible for the educational matters and needs of the region. G.W. Leitner became the Registrar of the Senate comprised of the Europeans, largely the officers of the Education Department, and of the aristocracy including the Punjab Chiefs. He, being the chief architect of the whole scheme, played a very significant role in influencing the Punjab Government's educational policy, particularly between 1867 and 1877.

On the literary side, the Anjuman started with a library of its own which was to be located in the rooms of the Shiksha Hall, Lahore. Pandit Manphool and Munshi Harsukh Rai donated to the library 500 and 700 books respectively. Pandit Radha Kishan was made incharge of the Sanskrit section for the collection and preservation of manuscript literature in Sanskrit. Similarly an Arabic and Persian section was provided with works in these two languages. Leitner was himself a good scholar of Islamic jurisprudence and civilization. The studies in these three classical languages got a further impetus in the year 1871-72 when the Anjuman brought out two periodicals, one each in Arabic and Sanskrit. These monthlies were named, *Zamima Anjuman-i-Punjab*, and *Risala Anjuman-i-Punjab*, respectively.

For encouragement to poetry, the Anjuman had its distinct branch called *Anjuman-i-Mushaira*. Its aim was to promote the composition and translation of poems of higher character than has hitherto been favoured by Orientals. This new Urdu poetry was best represented by Muhammed Hussain Azad and Altaff Hussain Hali.<sup>2</sup>

The aims of the Anjuman-i-Punjab were not limited only to educational and literary fields. The promotion of trade and industry in the province was also one of the objects. 'The Industrial Society,' a branch of the Anjuman, dealt with the problems of adoption of new techniques in industry.

Moreover, the Anjuman provided a platform to all those who were interested in public activities concerning different fields varying from art and industry to politics. It became an instrument of organiz-

2. For more details, see Nazer Singh, *Punjab Orientalism and "the Punjab Society : 1865-1901"* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis H.P. University, Shimla, 1987), pp. 194-206.

ing public opinion. It had a programme which included the following :<sup>3</sup>

The discussion of social, literary, and political questions of interest; the popularization of beneficial government measures; the development of a feeling of loyalty and of a common state citizenship, and the submission to government of practical proposals suggested by the wishes and wants of the people.

The Anjuman's two news organs played important role in this regard. These were the *Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i Punjab*, an Urdu weekly; and *The Punjab University Intelligencer*. The latter was the English organ edited by Nobin Chandra Rai. It was not a regular organ but was issued occasionally as a "Supplement" to the *Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab*.

Like the Anjuman-i-Punjab, the Lahore Oriental College was the creation of G.W. Leitner. It began as a school in 1865 and was named a College in the year 1872-73. It was run by the Punjab University College or the Senate. In fact, 'Oriental Movement' led by the Anjuman had failed to secure an Oriental University for the Punjab. Instead of an Oriental University, Government of India granted a 'Provincial University' to be established at Lahore. The Punjab University College started in 1869 was the proto of this University. However, the Punjab Government which had taken an intensive interest in the making of the 'Oriental movement' continued to support the Oriental College. But, it was the personality of G.W. Leitner, who was the Registrar of the Punjab University College and the President of the Anjuman-i-Punjab, which gave the Oriental College an important place on the scheme of education made largely by the Senate. The identification of the Oriental College with the Punjab University College was completed towards the end of 1876 when Leitner became the Honorary Superintendent of the former. Thus, the partial rejection of the underlying principles of the 'Oriental movement' by the establishment of the Punjab University College could not be affected. Leitner's Anjuman-i-Punjab became the informal Manager of the educational complex consisting of Oriental College, the Punjab University College and the Government College, Lahore. All these three institutions had a common complex in the Government College Lahore headed by G.W. Leitner.

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3. Leitner's Letter datet 21 Aug. 1886, see Proceedings Fore-Fro., A, April, 1887, Nos. 16-46 (N.A.I.).

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Leitner took two steps to restore the fastly falling public credibility of the Oriental College.<sup>4</sup> First, he restricted the admission to those whose parents were 'hereditary *maulvis* and *pandits*.' The standing of *maulvis* and *pandits* with the people was expected to add to the prestige of the college. It is important to keep in mind that the chief aim of the college was to produce new priests supposed to be good teachers and reformers in the wider sense of word. The step was to facilitate this process too.

Secondly, he started a 'Punjabi class' in the college during 1877-78. There Punjabi was taught through Gurmukhi characters. It was also a class where *Guru Granth Sahib* was taught. It was done inspite of the opposition by the education authorities. However, this opposition was soon got neutralized. Interestingly, the man who performed this task was L.H. Griffin.

Significantly, the 'Punjabi class' was even officially called 'Bhai class.' During 1878-79, there were total 17 boys in this class. Out of them 9 were 'sons of *granthis*, *mahants* and practicing *pandits*.' The class was obviously created to fulfil the Singh Sabha demand for the upliftment of Punjabi. It was maintained "for the purpose of training Sikh priests."

On April 12, 1879, on the occasion of the convocation of Punjab University College, Lord Lytton, the Viceroy announced his Government's decision to raise the College to University. However, his convocation address and also the remarks made by the Punjab Lieutenant-Governor in his welcome address to him kicked off a strong controversy over the nature of the new University. It was because, there was already a lot of confusion over the means and ends of the Punjab education. What would be the character of Panjab University? Would it be the same as the Calcutta University? Or would it be an Oriental University excluding the study of English language and western sciences; while concentrating upon the Indian classical studies? What would be the medium of instruction? What was the Government's intention in splitting the Calcutta University? What should be the nature of knowledge to be imparted by the Panjab University? The questions like these had been disturbing the enlightened public opinion both in Delhi and Lahore since 1877 when the Punjab Government had abolished Delhi College and demanded the raising of Punjab University College to the

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4. See Nazer Singh, *Punjab Orientalism*, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-77.

University. The remarks of both Lieutenant Governor and the Viceroy confused them further. The repeated reference in their speeches to Leitner as the maker of Panjab University caused suspicion among many a leaders of the community.<sup>5</sup> For them the establishment of a Panjab University was a part of Punjab Government's design to discourage English and higher education. This design had manifested itself by the abolition of Delhi College. Again, the Lieutenant Governor as well as Viceroy's attempt to make a distinction between the principles of the Punjab scheme of education, and those upon which the University of Calcutta was working,<sup>6</sup> was seen as isolating Punjab from Bengal with the aim of depriving its people of the facilities for higher/English education given by the Calcutta system. It was apprehended that under the influence of Leitner Punjab Government wanted to continue his anti higher/English education policy by splitting the University of Calcutta.<sup>7</sup>

The issue led to open divisions in the Anjuman-i-Punjab. One faction supported Leitner and appreciated Lytton's decision to alleviate the Panjab University College to the University. The second faction expressed doubts about the soundness of the decision.

5. In his welcome address, the Lieutenant Governor said, "Dr Leitner has from the beginning actively supported and directed the movement of which the Punjab University College is the result... The Punjab University College is the creation of the people of the Province. It is result of the desire of the people of the Punjab for a living and a growing system of education in the control and direction of which they may have a share, which will blend with the ancient learning of the country, and make use of its classical and vernacular languages as medium of instruction." *Supplement to Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 16th April, 1879.
6. Making a comparison between the Punjab University (College) and the Calcutta University, the Viceroy said, "The education it provides for the country is an education practically directed not at changing or altering or replacing, but to improving what is already best in the actual life and character of the people of the country." Referring to the two principles which distinguish Punjab University College from the educational institutions in India, Lytton said that the first was that education should be through the mother tongue. The second was "that the object of instruction shall be to develop the sentiment of enlightened loyalty by associating with it all those sentiments of natural reverence, duty and self-respect which every race inherited from the highest types of its own special character, whatever that character may be; and of which, for every student, there will always exist in its own inherited religion, whatever that religion may be; natural sources instinctively revered." *Supplement to Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 16th April, 1879.
7. See also, *The Lahore Chronicle*, January 16, 1867, p. 509.

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These divisions further weakened the Anjuman and doing so cleared the way for the emergence of denominational bodies such as The Aligarh Party, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha as an important factor in the public life of Lahore. G.W. Leitner was the real catalyst for them all.

### II

Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Aligarh Movement which originated with the formation of Scientific Society at Ghazipur in July 1864, did not share some of the fundamental ideas of Punjab education movement. To understand this, it is important to keep in mind three things. First, the idea of 'Oriental' education in respect to the use of vernaculars as the medium of instruction owed its practice to the N.W. Provinces and more specifically speaking to Delhi. The Vernacular in this context was Urdu. Although Urdu had an important place on the education scheme in the N.W. Provinces, and the development of this language was a concern of the Muslim reformers, yet the pre-Mutiny 'Delhi Renaissance' was not averse to English education including the study of, and through, English language. The significance of English language was on the increase as its knowledge fetched Government jobs. Aware of its economic and political importance, even the Muslim reformers like Aziz Ahmed were not averse to its study by their followers. Sayyid Ahmed Khan was even more appreciative of European knowledge and English language.

Secondly, the educational and reform activities of Sayyid Ahmed Khan were not taking place in isolation from Punjab. It was because Delhi where he was active had been placed under the Punjab in 1859. Its officials were aware of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's programme. For example Pandit Manphool, the Chief Munshi of Government of the Punjab in Persian Department, was in touch with him while the former was organizing the Scientific Society in 1864.<sup>18</sup> Pandit Manphool was an active member of the Anjuman-i-Punjab. Further, the Punjab Education Department was appreciative of Sayyid Ahmed Khan's efforts. By way of encouraging him, it subscribed to his chief ideological organ, *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* (1866). It was Major Fuller, Director Public Instruction Punjab, who had introduced

<sup>18</sup>. Letter of Pandit Manphool, Lahore, 29th January 1864 to the Scientific Society in Shah Muhammad, *The Aligarh Movement: Basic Documents: 1864-1890* 1978, p.27.

the *Gazete* in government schools and colleges.<sup>9</sup> Fuller was not very enthusiastic about Leitner's scheme of education.

Thirdly, the organizers of the Aligarh Movement were themselves planning to open an educational institution in the N.W. Provinces. They had raised a demand for it by asking the Government of India to establish a University in N.W. Provinces. The demand was parallel to the one made by the Anjuman-i-Punjab. The Government of N.W. Province was leading it in the same way as the Punjab administration was organizing Panjab University movement. Facing the rival claims of N.W. Provinces and the Punjab, the Government of India too was not averse to open a University for 'Northern India' located possibly in Delhi, a central place to both Punjab and N.W. Provinces. It was opposed by the Punjab. On this account, the Aligarh Movement considered Leitner's Anjuman-i-Punjab as its 'rival' organization.

However, it does not mean that there were no educational differences between the two movements. In fact, the Aligarh movement had a different approach towards the educational question. It welcomed the idea of Lahore University and its establishment for giving education through the vernaculars. But it differed with the promoters of the Punjab scheme on the content of education to be imparted. Aligarh movement was firmly committed to western/ 'liberal education', though imparted possibly through the vernacular. Sayyid Ahmed Khan had no reverence for the Oriental or indigenous knowledge as it was the case with G.W. Leitner. It was because of this very fact, Sayyid Ahmed Khan led British Indian Association, N.W. Provinces (established in May 1866) had mooted a 'vernacular university' for their province. Making a distinction between the Punjab proposal and its own plan, the Association submitted.<sup>10</sup>

The Punjab Government admitting the necessity of an Oriental University has essayed to commence its foundation. The aims and objects of this are excellent, but those of the University, which we solicit for these provinces are superior. The first had for its scope the revival and cultivation of Oriental languages, the latter seeks to be the means of diffusing throughout the country European learning and

9. "Proceedings of the Scientific Society, Aligarh dated 9th May, 1868" in Shah Muhammad, *Ibid.*, p. 163.

10. "Proceedings of a Meeting of the British Indian Association dated 11th July 1867" in Shah Muhammad (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 263.

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civilization—the attainment of such an object would change the whole condition of Hindostan.

In the 1870's Sayyid Ahmed Khan demanded the establishment of M.A. Oriental College, Aligarh. Initiative for this enterprise came from the British Government. Sayyid Ahmed's visit to England in 1869 proved decisive in this regard. It convinced him of the cultural superiority of the British and he sought their help to regenerate his community through modern education. The British regime too saw in him a good ally. About this visit and its future significance, Muhammad Sadiq writes:<sup>11</sup>

There is not denying his great ability, courage, and foresight, but at the same time it is faire to recognize that his extraordinary success was in part due to his friendly co-operation with the Government. In this respect it is not at all fanciful to surmise that the distinguished treatment accorded to him in England was in part directed by political consideration, namely, to be friend and strengthen the Muslims as a counter-weight against middle-class Hindus.

Sayyid Ahmed returned from England as an 'Anglicist' believing that the ruled could not progress without learning the language and manners of the rulers.<sup>12</sup> This understanding made English language, western knowledge and English manners significant in the eyes of the supporters of Aligarh Movement. Working on this theory, Sayyid Ahmed never attached the vernacular (Urdu) as well as the indigenous education more significance than English education in the double sense, i.e. education through English and education in Western (British) knowledge. Unlike Leitner, he had no reverence for indigenous system of education, Asian languages and the thoughts enshrining them.

Also, Sayyid Ahmed looked upon (Western) education as a panacea for the problems of Indians, especially the Muslims. It was this notion which led him to oppose Punjab Government's education policy. He condemned the abolition of Delhi College in 1877 and exhorted the Delhi people to organize their education themselves instead of looking to the Government.<sup>13</sup>

However, it was during 1880-81, that Sayyid Ahmed came most

11. Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature* Delhi, 1984, pp. 303-04.

12. David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation, Muslim Solidarity in British India* Princeton, 1978, p. 206.

13. Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931*, Oxford, 1981, p. 104.



heavily against the Punjab education policy and its main spokesman, Leitner. He criticised them through his *Aligarh Institute Gazette* that was prescribed by the Punjab Schools and Colleges. This criticism came in the wake of Lord Ripon's visit to Lahore on 11 and 12 November, 1880, when the Viceroy promised to raise the Punjab University College to a University committed to, unlike the other universities in India, Indian traditions of knowledge especially its religio-philosophical nature. Ripon's predecessor, Lord Lytton had also defined the object of education as social conservation rather than social change.<sup>14</sup> Reacting sharply to Ripon's Lahore speech, *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* wrote :

The natives have undoubtedly obtained great benefit from the spread of high English education. But *it is* to be deeply regretted that the Government has lately shown an inclination to adopt a retrogressive policy which is calculated to check it. We read with concern Lord Lytton's speeches which he delivered at some places in the Punjab and in which he showed that he was inclined in favour of the promotions of oriental studies. We have seen with the same feeling the address which was lately presented by the Senate of Panjab University to Lord Ripon... There is a wild clamour in the Punjab for the advancement of oriental learning.<sup>15</sup>

*The Gazette* further said that Indian classical literature and sciences were backward in comparison to the sources of modern European knowledge. Hence, Indian vernaculars could in no way be the medium of higher western knowledge. The technique of bringing this knowledge by way of translations within the reach of common man was also not very appropriate. It was so because the work of translation could not keep pace with the rapidly expanding knowledge, particularly in the field of science. *The Gazette* wrote, "The fact of the matter is that the regeneration of India depends entirely upon the spread of English education among the natives."<sup>16</sup>

This attack upon the Punjab scheme provoked the *Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab* to react in defence of the scheme. On December 10, 1880, *the Akhbar* wrote that "no nation in the world has risen to greatness without cultivating and improving its own language and

14. See, *Supplement to Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, dated 16 April 1879.

15. "The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 27th November, 1880", See, *Report on the Native Newspapers*, Punjab, Jan-Dec., 1880, p. 829.

16. *Ibid.*

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literature."<sup>17</sup> The Panjab University was not only to revive 'the dead Eastern Sciences' but was also to improve them in the light of western experience and discoveries. The history of Lahore College showed that "it has done more towards the spread of English education in the Punjab than towards that of Oriental learning."<sup>18</sup> The *Akhbar* was one with the Viceroy "in thinking that no education is perfect without a religious education."<sup>19</sup> In the *Akhbar's* opinion "the Government should patronage only those men who distinguish themselves both in Eastern and Western Science and adhere to their religion, and not the so called votaries of Western Science who are free thinkers and whose conduct is calculated to promote disaffection towards the Government."<sup>20</sup>

On December 18, the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* shot-back by saying that the Punjab was wrong in thinking that the Province was doing something new and unheard before. Something similar to Punjab education was attempted at Calcutta, and Delhi before 1857 as well as by the Aligarh Scientific Society in the N.W. Provinces. The Directors of Public Instruction of both Bengal, and N.W. Provinces were aware of this 'philosophy'. The underlying ideas of this scheme were not in the interest of the progress of the Indian people. *The Gazette* says :<sup>21</sup>

True, every nation in Europe has attained to greatness by the improvement of its own literature and science, but our case is quite different from that of the European nations. There is a national rule in every country in Europe, but we are subject to a foreign nation whose language is different from us. We never heard of any nation, subject to another nation acquiring honour, wealth and power by the cultivation of its own language and literature. . . . It would be as absurd for the natives to expect to improve their condition by the revival of their sciences as for the oborigins of America by the improvement of their science, whatever that science may be. National progress and national greatness are as it were two sisters. . . . The revival of oriental literature and science is calculated to check rather than further our progress. The secret object of

17. "The Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab, 10th December, 1880" see, *Report on the Native News Papers, Punjab*, Jan-Dec., 1880, p. 829.

18. "The Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab, 10th Dec., 1880", *Ibid.*, p. 730.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 832.

20. *Ibid.*

21. "The Aligarh Institute Gazette, December 18, 1880" in *Report on the Native News Papers, Punjab*, Jan-Dec., 1880, p. 851.

the advocates of the Oriental system is that we should always remain in our present state of slavery.

*The Aligarh Institute Gazette* was in agreement with Sir Alexander Arbuthnot in thinking that the Punjab had not only revived the old controversy between the Orientalists and Occidentalists but it had also added a new dimension to it. Through this new dimension the western education was being seen as fostering 'political discontent', and it was being opposed on that very ground.

A few months later, *the Gazette* published a report by Sayyid Ahmed Khan upon the proceedings of the Northbrook Indian Society and club held on August 5, 1881, in London. The Society feared that the Punjab University would be an institution of oriental classics and deprive the people of high education in English literature and European science. On this account, the Society noted that, "High Education in the Punjab is doomed."<sup>22</sup>

Leitner continued to defend himself against the attacks made by the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*. Through the *Punjab University Intelligencer* he said that Sayyid Ahmed Khan was wrong for maintaining that the vernacular education ought to be European and necessarily given through Urdu. Urdu could not be the medium of instruction for the whole of Northern India. *The Intelligencer* reads :

Almost every province of India has its own vernacular. The idea to have a *lingua franca* for the whole of India, or to make Urdu the vernacular of the whole of Northern India, is a utopian one. Mass education, to be successful must be given through the spoken language of the people. For instance, in the Punjab through Punjabi; in the North-West Provinces, Oudh and the Central Provinces, through Hindustani (which is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu) in Bengal through Bengali, and so forth.<sup>23</sup>

Sayyid Ahmed Khan did not subscribe to the Anjuman-i-Punjab's idea of Provincial languages being the medium of instruction. To him the idea of using Punjabi as the medium of education and communication in the Punjab was impracticable and ridiculous. *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* sarcastically observed :

We are going to receive a liberal education through a medium of the Punjabi and Gurmukhi and the want of intercourse

22. "The Aligarh Institute Gazette, Sept. 10, 1881," in *Report on the Native News Papers, Punjab, op. cit.*, p. 538.

23. "The Punjab University Intelligencer, 18th October, 1881," in *Report, Ibid.*, p. 618.

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that exists between the rulers and the ruled on account of differences of language and habits will be a thing of the past, and the two races will be brought together by means of the vernacular of 'the land of five waters.'<sup>24</sup>

Sayyid Ahmed, as a member of the imperial legislative Assembly successfully saw to it that the Panjab University Bill, 1882 should not be anti English education in any way. In 1883, he visited Punjab and addressed the Indian Association in Lahore. He asked both the Hindus and Muslims to work together for the educational upliftment of their countrymen, especially the Muslims. Referring to these days, Lajpat Rai recollected :

Fortunately for the Punjab, the formal legislative incorporation of the University happened to be undertaken in the time of a liberal viceroy like Lord Ripon with an equally liberal Lieutenant-Governor like Sir Charles Aitchison and the Punjab was saved from what would have been nothing short of a disaster to the educational progress of the province. These were those good old days when the present ill-feeling between the Hindus and Muhammedans had not yet started and when no less a person than Sir Syed Ahmed Khan himself considered it an honour to speak under the Hindus and Muhammadens, the two pupils of his eyes.<sup>25</sup>

### III

The Braymo Samaj opened its branch in Lahore in 1863. Although the Brahmos tried to run their branches in the other cities of Punjab, yet they could succeed nowhere except Simla. In fact, the Brahmo movement came to this region with the Bengalis, and it remained confined to the Bengali community. The strength of the Brahmos largely depended upon the strength of Bengalis in the region. Their Lahore Branch owed its relative success to a comparatively large Bengali concentration in that city where they had come either as petty-Government officials or missionaries accompanying the British administration. But this very fact of their being related by their profession to Government and church helped them in becoming "the vanguard of public

24. "The Aligarh Institute Gazette, Sept. 10, 1881" See *Report on Native Newspapers, N.W.P.*, January-December 1881, p. 538 (NAI).

25. V.C. Joshi (ed.) *Lala Lajpat Rai Rai, Writings and Speeches*, Vol. I, 1888-1919 (Delhi, 1966), p. 119.

life in Lahore."<sup>26</sup> Eminent of them were Babu Partul Chandra Chatterjee, Kali Prosano Roy, Joginder Chander Bose and Novin or Nabin Chandra Roy. First three were on the Lahore Bar.

The most prominent of the Lahore Brahmos was Novin Chandra Roy who came to Lahore in 1869 to join as the Deputy-Superintendent of Oriental College, and Deputy Registrar of the Panjab University College. He was also the President of the Brahmo Samaj, Lahore, and an active member of the Anjuman-i-Punjab. As a member of the Anjuman-i-Punjab, he assisted Pandit Radhakishan in-charge of Sanskrit learning in the region.<sup>27</sup> However, his position as a social reformer was soon challenged by the Hindu orthodoxy led by Pandit Sharda Ram Philouri.

By the time Novin C. Roy came to Lahore, Urdu-Hindi controversy had already originated in N.W. Provinces. He was aware of this controversy and was on the side of those demanding the use of Nagari for writing 'Hindi-Urdu' as well as de-Persianization of this language. He did not favour a small group of Brahmo members of the Anjuman-i-Punjab led by Lala Behari Lal in their advocacy of the use of only Punjabi for the Brahmo work in the Punjab. With the coming of Hunter Commission on Primary Education in 1882, there was revived 'Urdu-Hindi' controversy again. In Punjab this controversy became further complicated when the Anjuman-i-Punjab led by Leitner, and the Singh Sabha demanded the recognition of Punjabi in Gurmukhi as the Provincial language of Punjab. This was opposed by Novin Chandra Roy, Sitala Kanta and Kali Prosanna were on *the Tribune* staff, and the former was member of Arya Samaj.

The association of the Brahmos with the Arya Samaj was far from being sudden. It had begun in 1873 when Swami Dayanand visited Calcutta. In fact, it was on the advice of Brahmo leaders of Bengal like Kesheb Chandra Sen and Davindra Nath Tagore that the Swami had adopted Hindi for his work. This association continued and Novin Chandra Roy met Dayanand during the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi in January 1877. He invited Dayanand to visit Lahore. In Lahore the Brahmos were the first to play host to the Swami and to project him as the restorer of greatness to India civilization. For example, Pandit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri, a prominent Brahmo of Lahore,

26. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Bhagat Lakshman Singh Autobiography*, Calcutta, 1965, p. 46.

27. Proceedings, Home-Public, A, 1872, Nos. 235-55 (NAI).

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wrote in his journal *Baradari-i-Hind* about Dayanand thus :

To be brief, the destruction of ignorance and prejudice from among the nation, the diffusion of knowledge, the creation of a national union, and evolving, out of this Union, an all-embracing civilization, which will make the Indian community a model community, is the first and final aim of this man.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps, the most important contribution made by the Brahmos of Lahore was the formation of Indian Association in 1877. It was a branch of Indian Association, Calcutta. The latter was organized on July 24, 1876 by Surendranath Banerjea and A.M. Bose, with the object of bringing the people of various provinces of India, especially the educated ones, on a common political platform. For this they had launched a civil services agitation and made a determined effort to teach patriotism and politics to the younger generation through their speeches and writings and by organizing students' Associations in many districts of Bengal. By opening branches outside Bengal, they hoped to build a national center around the Association for struggle against the British. For this, they naturally looked to the Bengali community settled in North India especially the Brahmo missionaries, pleaders and teachers as their first allies. No wonder if Lahore Association was "mainly composed of or controlled by expatriate Bengalis."<sup>29</sup>

The target-audience for the Association was everywhere the intelligentsia. It was more so in the Punjab where both in Delhi and Lahore the educated were agitating over the closure of Delhi College. The closure decision was made public at the Delhi Durbar where Surendranath Banerjea was present as a correspondent of *The Hindu Patriot*. Led by the more active and 'independent' member of the Delhi Society, the people protested against the closure decision to the Viceroy, and the Secretary of State for India. They organised public meetings both as a mark of protest and for raising subscriptions for reviving or opening a new college. One such meeting was addressed by Sayyid Ahmed Khan also.

28. Quoted in Chhajju Singh, *Life and Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, Pt. II, Lahore, 1903, p. 335.

29. S.R. Mehrotra, *The Emergence of the Indian National Congress*, Vikas, 1971, p. 168.

The Punjab Government's decision to close the Delhi College and to raise the Panjab University College to a University attracted Banerjea's attention. He publically denounced the Government which "could not spend Rs. 12,000 a year for the maintenance of an ancient and time honoured seat of learning (when) the Delhi Assemblage cost 60 lacs."<sup>30</sup> He was sure that the people of Delhi "will not allow themselves to fall asleep over the abolition."<sup>31</sup>

The Delhi protest against the closure of College was supported by some 'hundred citizens' from Lahore led by Pandit Manphool. In fact, it was this resentment against the Government which gave birth to Lahore Indian Association to counter what was regarded as the anti-English education policy of the Punjab Government being practiced under the influence of Leitner.

If Surendranath Banerjea was not happy with the Punjab Government for its closure decision, Swami Dayanand and his supporters were displeased with it for not recognizing the Swami's worth as a Vedic scholar. Dayanand had sent his commentry upon the Vedas to different Orientalists including those associated with the Panjab University College and the Oriental College Lahore. He had done so from Bombay in 1875, and from Benaras in 1877. When he came to Lahore in April 1877, he met J. Griffith and Holryod, the Punjab Secretary, and Director Public Instruction, respectively. His aim was to persuade them to get his works introduced as study courses at the Panjab University College.<sup>32</sup> He also requested the Government to subsidize the publication of his Vedic commentry. After consulting R. Griffith, Principal, Banars Sanskrit College, C.H. Tawaney, Principal Presidency College, Calcutta, and three Sanskrit scholars of Lahore, the Punjab Government rejected Dayanand's proposals. The report on the basis of which the Punjab decision was made had been submitted by Leitner, the Registrar of Panjab University College. The Arya Samaj, Lahore, got hold of this report on 25th August, 1877. Immediately, the Aryas made two representations to the Punjab Government. In one representation, Dayanand made an attempt to meet the objections raised in the report, and in the second, the Lahore Arya Samaj prayed to the Government for the reconsideration of its decision.

30. Quoted in Narayani Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 109.

31. *Ibid.*

32. Dayanand remained in Lahore from 19th April, 1877 to 11th July, 1878.

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Both these representations were rejected on 14th November, 1877.<sup>33</sup>

The Lahore Arya Samaj was led by its President, Mulraj M.A. Before his coming to Lahore in 1877, he had been Secretary of the Delhi Society that opposed the Punjab Government's decision to close down the Delhi college. He was convinced that Leitner was personally responsible for the closure decision.

It was with this background that the Lahore Arya Samaj started its work. Clearly like the Lahore Indian Association, it began its organizational career with a note of resentment against the Punjab Government as well as Leitner because they had not patronized Dayanand. This resentment took a new turn after the Viceroy's declaration at the convocation of Panjab University college in April 1879 that his government would soon introduce a Bill in the Imperial Legislature granting the conversion of the college into university. The Viceroy, Lytton's declaration "infinitely strengthened the hands of the Lieutenant Governor and of all supporters of the movement in favour of a national education...."<sup>34</sup>

This argument of 'national education' did not find favour with the Brahmos and the Arya Samaj. It was interpreted as to mean the restoration of indigenous system of education in which there was to be no place for western knowledge and English language. When made against the background of Punjab Government's closure of Delhi College, this interpretation also meant that state administration was inclined to discourage higher education. The Brahmo Samaj with its Bengali core was particularly concerned with it, because the establishment of Panjab University would mean first and foremost the split of Calcutta University, and the separation of Punjab from Bengal. They saw behind this move the working of that Anglo-Indian spirit in accordance with which the intelligentsia of Bengal represented by 'the Babu' was politically unreliable and deserved repression.<sup>35</sup> Their fears were further strengthened by the pronouncements of Punjab

33. J.T.F. Jorden, *Dayanad Sarswati : His Life and Ideas*, Delhi, 1978, p. 117.

34. *Proceedings, Home Education, A*, August 1879, nos. 21-27, NAI.

35. Referring to this feeling of many among the Punjab administration, the *Lahore Chronicle* commented on March 14, 1868 : "No doubt many dread the spread of English education any further, when they read and hear the speeches and sentiments of the Bengalis, and see their independence on the Bench and at the Bar and their usefulness in all departments of public service, but do they think that the fire which had been handled in the breast of the native through English education could now be quenched ?" p. 305.



officials who often emphasised that the Punjab education was aimed at avoiding the production of something like the English speaking Babus (of Bengal) in the Punjab. The denigration of Bengal system of education as well as its product 'the Babu' was taken as their own denigration by the Bengali community in Lahore composed largely of the Babus or the petty officials. Due to this reason, the community actively supported the opponents of Punjab Government's education policy, particularly on the question of raising Panjab University College to a University.

The criticism of Punjab education policy in general, and of Leitner in particular by the organisations, like the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and Indian Association, had its impact upon the students in Lahore. This impact became visible in July 1880 at the Government College Lahore, where Leitner was the Principal. There a group of students boycotted their classes.<sup>36</sup> The group was agitated over the rough treatment given to one of their fellow-student, namely, Sri Ram, by the Principal. Sri Ram was the brother of Mulraj, President of Lahore Arya Samaj. The latter was a critic of Leitner since 1877. The incident attracted the attention of not only the press in the province but also the newspapers of Calcutta. It got wide publicity through the *Safir-i-Hind*, a vernacular weekly of Amritsar. It was reported that Sri Ram was beaten up "severely" by Leitner.<sup>37</sup> *The Safir* said that the incident of beating was not the first one. It was a habit with Leitner who had forced many respectable parents to send their sons to Aligarh for study. Hence it was obvious how unpopular the Lahore College had become under Dr Leitner's management,<sup>38</sup> wrote the weekly.

This incident was given wide publicity by Surendranath Banerjea's newspaper, the *Bengalee*<sup>39</sup>. Leitner was projected as an enemy of the Brahmo and Arya students. *The Bengalee* asked the students in Punjab to shed their timidity and teach him a lesson. The newspapers demanded that Leitner should not be allowed to prohibit the students from attending Brahmo and Arya Samaj meetings.<sup>40</sup>

36. "The Punjabi Akhbar," July 17, 1880 in *Report on Native News Papers, Punjab, January - December, 1880*, p. 501 (NAI).

37. "Safir-i-Hind", Amritsar, July 10, 1880 in *Report, ibid.*, p. 478.

38. *Ibid.*

39. "The Safir-i-Hind," Amritsar, July 17, 1880 in *Report, op. cit.*, p. 502.

40. *Ibid.*

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*The Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab* refuted the charges made against Leitner. *The Akhbar* wrote that "Dr Leitner does not prohibit the students of the Lahore College from going to the Brahmo Samaj or the Arya Samaj."<sup>41</sup>

It did not stop the *Safir-i-Hind* which wrote that some people were trying in vain to defend Leitner though their arguments had already been refuted. *The Safir* reads :

Did he beat Sri Ram...to gratify his old enmity against his brother Mul Raj ?<sup>42</sup>

In mid-October, 1880, the Lahore Indian Association submitted a memorial to the Punjab Government requesting it not to raise the Panjab University College to University. A few days later, the Viceroy's visit to Lahore and his speeches there in connection with the Panjab University, provoked Sayyid Ahmed Khan to denounce the Punjab move as unprogressive. His *Aligarh Institute Gazette* not only itself lashed out at the backward ideology of Punjab education but also boldened the local press in Lahore and Amritsar to come forward against the Panjab University as well as Leitner.

The *Safir-i-Hind* again took the lead and opposed the promotion of Panjab University College to the University. It rejected Leitner's argument that religion must form a part of education system and the priestly classes ought to be associated with the task of giving education and regenerating Indian languages and society. Considering this idea as ridiculous, the *Safir* asks :

Is there at present a scarcity of Pandits and Mullas in the Punjab that it is intended to make more Pandits and Mullas in order that they may offer prayers every day in the morning on behalf of the souls of the Panjab University and its supporters ?<sup>43</sup>

In the similar vain, *The Akhbar-i-Am*, wrote :

There are many Maulvis and Pandits who are perfect Arabic and Sanskrit scholars but do they in the least promote the interests of their country ? They are not eligible for posts in the public service and are held in no respect by Government. They are quite ignorant of politics.<sup>44</sup>

41. "The Akhbar-i-Anjuman-i-Punjab, 23 July, 1880" in *Report, op. cit.*, pp. 5, 9.

42. "The Safir-i-Hind, July 24, 1880" in *Report, op. cit.*, p. 519.

43. "The Safir-i-Hind", Amritsar, January 15, 1881 in *Report on Native News Papers, N.W.P.*, January-December 1881 (NAI).

44. "The Akhbar-i-Am," October 12, 1881 in *Report, ibid.*, p. 602.

Elaborating on the political aspect of the education question, the *Akhbar-i-Am* said that Local Self-Government would come to India stage by stage and province by province, because, all parts of India were not at the same level of mental-development. However, the turn of Punjab might never come. *The Akhbar* writes:

Surely the Punjab will never be considered fit for it, because its inhabitants have been declared to be more dangerous than those of any other Province, and rigorous efforts are already being made to put a stop to English education here.<sup>45</sup>

Meanwhile, the Lahore India Association criticized the Punjab education policy and started organizing public meetings against the decision of converting Panjab University college into university. It also launched an English organ of its own, *The Tribune*, in February 1881.

First of these meetings took place in Amritsar in March 1881. It was followed by a letter of protest which A.M. Bose, Secretary of Indian Association, Calcutta, wrote to the Secretary of State for India

In its letter, the Association gave three reasons for its intervention in the matter. First, the Association had a branch in Lahore, and it was legitimate for it to support its own Branch which was opposing the Panjab University. Secondly, the people of Bengal felt for the future of the people of Punjab. They had learnt to do so through a common system of education in the two provinces. Thirdly, the issue was relevant to the future of 'high education' in India as such. Taking the Punjab policy as injurious to 'high education,' and identifying 'high education' with 'English education,' the letter says :

The abolition of the Delhi College was a serious blow to High English Education in the Punjab, which caused a deep sensation at that time, and which even now is deplored by the entire educated community of India. Ever since then, the committee regret to say, the education policy that has been pursued in the Punjab has been of a retrograde and repressive character...<sup>46</sup>

Referring to the past experience of the Panjab University College the Association maintained that in an obvious bid to discourage English education it undertook to instruct the people through the

45. *Ibid.*, November 19, 1881, p. 687.

46. "Letter of Baboo A.M. Bose, Honorary Secretary, Indian Association, to Secretary of State for India, 27th July, 1881" in Proceedings, Home Education, A, September, 1881, Nos. 25-27. Hereafter called 'Letter of A.M. Bose.'

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medium of their vernaculars. The vernaculars of Punjab, like those of many other provinces, "are in a very backward state and are utterly unfit to train the mind or to communicate a knowledge of the modern sciences."<sup>47</sup> As there was not a single book existing in these languages for this purpose, the college took on itself the task of producing some such works through translations. However, this enterprise did not succeed. Feeling that the Punjab experiment was bound to failure, the Association writes:

In the humble opinion of the committee the Panjab University College authorities have set to work in a wrong way altogether. They have taken upon themselves to form a literature formed under such circumstances and under such auspices: Foreigners, however, learned and however well-intentioned, can never hope to form the literature of an other people, and the only way in which they can help in the formation of such a literature is by bestowing on the people a sound education and thus enabling them to create a literature for themselves.<sup>48</sup>

This was what had happened in Bengal where the missionaries tried to produce literature in Bengali but could not succeed. Recognizing this fault Macaulay gave a sound system of English education to Bengal. The English educated Bengalis produced good literature in Bengali. The same could be "repeated" in the Punjab.

The Association advises:

Let the people have a thorough English education, and they will themselves form their own literature without any interference on the part of the educational authorities.<sup>49</sup>

Apart from these aspects, the Association saw that the issue "involves political considerations of a weighty character."<sup>50</sup> Explaining it, the letter says:

The spread of English education is, indeed, the firmest basis of the permanency of British rule in India, while at the same time it affords the only possible means to elevate the people and make them share in the glorious heritage of modern civilization. The light of western culture has already dawned in India, and as an immediate and direct consequ-

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

uence the various nationalities which inhabit this vast continent are rising as it were from a long sleep and are advancing in knowledge and civilization.<sup>51</sup>

The Government of India did not take any action upon this representation of Indian Association. It did not even bother to bring its objections into the notice of Punjab administration.<sup>52</sup>

The Lahore Indian Association continued with its programme of holding public meetings against the university decision of the Government. It submitted memorials demanding English education. One such meeting was held in Rawalpindi on 20th September, 1881. It was called by Lala Kishan Chand, Secretary, Arya Samaj, Rawalpindi. The meeting decided to submit a memorial drawn up by Babu Suresh Chandra and Babu Chander Nath Mitra. *The Tribune* published the proceedings of this meeting.<sup>53</sup>

When Leitner came to know about the Rawalpindi memorial, he wrote to Mohamed Aslam Sher Khan, an Extra Assistant Commissioner of Rawalpindi, to submit a counter memorial in favour of the university.<sup>54</sup> In his letter, Leitner charged the Arya Samaj of engineering anti-university move in Rawalpindi. He particularly criticized the Arya Samaj President about whom he wrote to Aslam Sher Khan :

Munshi Mulraj is a man of notoriously bad character, that he was expelled from the university, and that he is the leader of the Arya Samaj.<sup>55</sup>

*The Tribune*, Lahore not only gave coverage to the actions of those opposing the University, but also took upon itself to defend their position. For example, on October 8, 1881, it quoted Lord Lytton to the effect that the objects, the methods, and the relative spheres of action of the Punjab and Calcutta universities were not only different but they were essentially dissimilar. Lytton was reported to have said that the Bengal system of education in Punjab "might possibly weak (en) their nationality, but it would not certainly strengthen their loyalty". According to *The Tribune*, Lytton's statement meant "in plain English that the manly Sikh must not be allowed to

51. *Ibid.*

52. Proceedings, Home Education, A, September 1881, Nos. 25-27 (NAI).

53. *The Tribune*, Lahore, September 24, 1881.

54. *Ibid.*, Oct. 15 and 22, 1881.

55. "The Koh-i-Noor, October 26, 1881" in *Report, op. cit.*, pp. 631-32.

acquire the independence and ability of the physically weak Bangali."<sup>56</sup>

A similar memorial as that of Rawalpindi was made against the Panjab University by some inhabitants of Gujranwala.<sup>57</sup> The memorialists gave two reasons for their action. First, they did so as they feared that the university would discourage English education. It would be harmful for the regeneration of India and her literature. Indian classical languages and vernaculars could not regenerate her, they said.

The Memorial reads :

The people of the East, your memorialists are of humble opinion, cannot be revived by any attempts to infuse life into their great dead literature, the only means of reviving them lies in the infusing of the spirit of truth, freedom, manliness, equality self-help, preservance and activity which breaths in every page of the English literature, for nothing else is calculated to change for better the dreamy impracticable character of our country-men, which is a result of the influence exercised on their minds from generation to generation by the poetry and philosophy of their country which are proverbially dreamy and impracticable.<sup>58</sup>

The second reason for the Memorialists to oppose the coming university was that its existing Senate could not discharge its duty "with intelligence, independence, efficiency and proper regard for the educational interests of the Province."<sup>59</sup> First, the Senate should be reorganized. The new Senate should have half of its members Indians and half of these Indian members must "be men of high English education and independence of character."<sup>60</sup>

Some people from Gujranwala, led by Basant Lal, submitted a counter memorial supporting the Panjab University College and its conversion into University.<sup>61</sup> Referring to the first memorial from their city opposing the conversion of the college, it says :

Your memorialists emphatically repudiate the memorial sent in the name of their town which was the work of some Babus

56. *The Tribune*, Lahore, October 8, 1881.

57. See, Proceedings, Home Education-B, November 1881, Nos. 8-9 (NAI).

58. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

61. "Gujranwala Memorial in Favour of Punjab University Bill received by the Government of Punjab on 4.11.81" in Proceedings Home Education, B, November, 1881, Nos. 10-11 (Hereafter called 'Gujranwala Memorial' (NAI).

of Lahore, who succeeded, through the limited influence of two youngmen presiding over the local government and mission schools in getting it signed chiefly by the boys of their schools. As that memorial does not represent the rank, influence, number, learning or even the majority of our town, therefore, we hope that, that unpatriotic memorial will not engage the attention of your Excellency.<sup>62</sup>

The counter-memorial expressed the hope that the Viceroy would not depart "from those liberal and free principles laid down in the statutes of the Panjab University College, which have worked so well, during the last eleven years and in which they see every hope for the formation of a national civilization and the revival of their classical languages and literatures."<sup>63</sup>

A significant feature of the counter-memorial from Gujranwala was that the memorial was both in English and Nagari-Hindi. The portion of the memorial in Nagari-Hindi defended the Panjab University College for its contribution in reviving the ancient learning, especially the religious studies, which the people of the land had forgotten. It reads in Nagari Hindi :

*Pratham, jin granthon aur shastron ke nam se bhi ham bhul gaye the ab ve granth aur shastr aur unke abhigy vigyan nagar-nagar main mil sakte hai.*<sup>64</sup>

(First and foremost, *granthas* and *Shastras*, the (holy) works which were lost to our memory, have now been, together with the sciences they contained, made available (by the college) in each and every town.

This was a reference to Sanskrit studies which the college attempted, and this reference was intended obviously to silence the organizations like the Arya Samaj opposing the college and university but posing themselves as the champions of ancient and indigenous wisdom. It is important to remember that the differences among the Aryas over the issue of as to what an extent their system of education should be Sanskritic or correspondingly Anglicist were cropped up as early as 1883. These differences culminated in the split of Arya Samaj a decade later. The arguments put forward by 'the Gurukul Party' were not much different from that of Leitner.<sup>65</sup> Perhaps, the Arya Samaj could not and did not reject Leitner's ideas in total.

62. Gujranwala Memorial, *op. cit.*

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*

65. Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharam*, Manohar, 1976, p. 22.

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Be as it may, the public meetings and memorials from Rawalpindi, and Gujranwala showed the participation of pleaders, teachers and students in the anti-university 'agitation' led by the Lahore Indian Association backed by the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj. The role of 'baboo's and Bengalis was conspicuous from their actions like the drafting up of memorials, and from the defence of Bengal system of education by *The Tribune* edited by a Bengali. The Bengali influence over the agitators became visible when a students' Association was organized in Lahore in 1881. The initiative for this came from Novin Chandra Roy and this Lahore Students' Association was based upon the model provided by Surendranath Banerjee and A.M. Bose's Students' Association, in Bengal.

The pro-British newspapers were quick to notice the presence of Bengalis on the side of those opposing Punjab Government's education policy. *The Civil and Military Gazette* was perhaps the first to brand this opposition as Bengali inspired. On November 19, 1880, it remarked that the University controversy had the shades of old controversy between the 'Anglicists' and 'the Orientalists.' But there was something more also about it. Referring to it, the *Gazette* wrote, "The cry, too, has been raised of 'the Calcutta University in danger' and the worthy and estimable Bengali element in our midst has been called to the rescue."<sup>66</sup> A year following it, a local vernacular newspaper condemned the educated Punjabis "who, acting under the evil advice of some Bengalis, protest against the raising of the Panjab University to the full status of a University."<sup>67</sup> This tendency of branding anti-government agitations as Bengali inspired was to grow among the Punjab official circles with the growth of national consciousness among the people of the region.

In spite of this propaganda the Lahore Students Association got a good response from the local student community. Its organizer, Nobin Chandra Roy became popular with them so much so that all the students of Medical College, Lahore, "joined enmasse"<sup>68</sup> the Punjab Brahmo Samaj on December 9, 1881. During 1881, the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj launched the Nagari-Hindi agitation demanding the use of it in the educational institutions and law-courts in the Punjab. A signature campaign was launched in this connection among the students. The campaign proved a success for the Arya Samaj which was able to attract some of the Brahmo activists like

66. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, November 19, 1880.

67. "The Rahbar-i-Hind, December 5, 1881" in *Report, op.cit.*

68. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, Nov. 19, 1880.



Lajpat Rai towards its programme and organization. Lajpat Rai started his political career with this signature campaign which he had joined under the inspiration of Guru Dutt.<sup>69</sup>

In 1883, in a serious bid to convert Indian Association into an all-India centre of anti-British movement, Surendranath Banerjea launched a 'national fund' collection campaign. For this purpose, a 'National Society' was constituted. However, Banerjea was arrested in connection with what is called 'the Bengalee libel case.'<sup>70</sup> The arrest of Banerjea and the Ilbert Bill controversy created a lot of excitement among the intelligentsia in Lahore. On April 1, 1883, a meeting of the committee for collecting 'National Fund' took place in the city. Attended by more than a hundred educated gentlemen, the meeting was addressed by R.C. Bary in English. and by Maharam Ali, editor of *Koh-i-Nur*, in Urdu.<sup>71</sup>

The imprisonment of Banerjea in May led to a number of student meetings in Lahore demanding his release. A general meeting of the students was held in the Tribune premises on 26th May. Attended by 600 students, the meeting adopted three resolutions on Banerjea's imprisonment. The first resolution moved by Ruchi Ram says that "this meeting expresses its deep and heartfelt sympathy with the distinguished patriot Babu Surendranath Banerjea."<sup>72</sup> It was seconded by Hari Kishan and supported by Guru Dutt. The second resolution provided for sending a telegram of sympathy to Banerjea. Moving the resolution, Jai Ram compared Banerjea to Mazzini. Bhai Ditt Singh made an 'enthusiastic speech' in the support. By the third resolution, a committee was formed to enlighten the public on the issues involved in his arrest.

The 'National Society' also met the same day and decided to raise subscriptions for the 'national fund.' Similar meetings were held in Hazara and Ambala.

Banerjea was released in the first week of July. The *Tribune* gave a head line to his release which runs : 'Surendranath Banerjea liberated.'<sup>74</sup> The release did not dampen public enthusiasm as the

69. *Ibid.*

70. See, S.R. Mehrotra. *op. cit.*, pp. 259-61.

71. *The Tribune*, Lahore, April 21, 1883.

72. *Ibid.*, June 2, 1883.

73. *The Tribune*, Lahore, July 7, 1883.

74. *Ibid.*, July 7, 1883.

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other two issues namely the 'national fund' and the Ilbert controversy continued to attract intelligentsia's attention.

In June 1884, Banerjea toured Punjab in connection with his scheme of 'national fund.' He visited Ambala, Lahore, Amritsar, Rawalpindi and Multan. In Lahore, the Students' Association organized a welcome function in his honour. The address presented by the Association to him on the occasion was in recognition of his services "for the good of our father land."<sup>75</sup> The address was signed by Guru Datt, President, and Lalu Ram Bajpai and Madan Mohan Lal, Secretaries of the Association.

Banerjea's visit to Punjab strengthened the 'national fund' collection campaign. The people responded favourably. About this response, *The Tribune* wrote, "This is highly encouraging and may, we think, rightly put Bengal with all its riches and its millionaire *Zamindars* to the blush."<sup>76</sup>

A salient feature of these public meetings, especially the ones held in connection with the Ilbert Bill, was the participation of Sikhs in them. If Bhai Ditt Singh was active in the students movement, Bhai Jawahir Singh was active in the Arya Samaj and Indian Association movements. The latter was successful in winning the Singh Sabha's support for the Ilbert Bill and the civil services agitation.<sup>77</sup> The Sikh participation in these meetings organized by the Indian Association was particularly marked in Rawalpindi where the Sikh Sardars like Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Sujan Singh, Malik Khazan Singh, Sher Singh and Tara Singh supported them.<sup>78</sup> The Rawalpindi Branch of the Indian Association was one of the few active branches of Association in the region. It had, for *The Tribune*, made Rawalpindi 'the northern most limit of the enlightened Punjab.'<sup>79</sup>

If these public meetings and political activities were the signs of rising 'national' consciousness among the Punjabi intelligentsia inspired by the Bengalis for *The Tribune*, this very fact of Bengali publicists acquiring popularity through their influence over the educated in Punjab was a matter of regret for the *Civil and Military Gazette*. The participation of Sikh students in the activities of Student's Association was a matter even of greater regret for the *Gazette*. On June 2, 1883,

75. *The Tribune*, Lahore, May 31, 1884.

76. *Ibid.*, June 12, 1884.

77. *Ibid.*, August 30, 1884.

78. *The Tribune*, Lahore, Nov. 8. 1884.

79. *Ibid.*

the *Gazette* commented upon the student meeting at Lahore thus :

The meetings were got up by Bengalis who put forward their tools—the unfortunate students—to occupy the prominent places, make speeches and so forth; in order that the reports of the meetings might lead people down country to suppose that these gatherings were spontaneous out-come of Punjabi feelings.<sup>80</sup>

In its next issue, the *Gazette* published a letter reporting that at the students' meeting of 26th May, a Sikh gentleman distinguished himself by asking his audience to carry on their work given by Babu Surendranath Banerjea by 'the preservance with which the Sikh Gurus have pursued their aims, in the face of serious difficulties.' He went on to suggest that 'the Babu be informed that we are ready to sacrifice our lives for you.'<sup>81</sup>

This 'Sikh gentleman' was obviously Bhai Ditt Singh, who had supported the second resolution upon Surendranath Banerjea in the students' meeting of May 26. About him, the *Gazette* wrote :

All these statements of this so called gentleman very clearly show that he was not a real Sikh; and they did rather abuse Sikhism than serve all his arguments. He seems to belong to the class of the Sikh youth, who receive education at college these days, and who are with a few exceptions, nominal Sikhs only; for they have deviated so much from the path of Sikhism as to have become something else. Having lost their national characteristics on account of this deviation they have imbibed agitationary principles.....<sup>82</sup>

Ten days after these remarks that declared the participation in Indian 'nationalist' activities an act of apostasy for a Sikh, and which declared existing education as the cause of Sikh youth's deviation from Sikhism resulting in apostasy as well as agitationary spirit among them, the *Gazette* reported that the various Singh Sabhas of the Punjab were engaged themselves in a scheme for establishing a 'national institution' of education. Taking apostasy and disloyalty as the two sides of the same coin, and after lamenting over the two being in currency among the Sikh youth, the paper saw that, "The promoters of the scheme deplore the degeneracy of the Sikh youth of the towns and villages; and they intended that the training to be provided by the

80. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, June 2, 1883, p. 4.

81. *Ibid.*, June 6, 1884, p. 6.

82. *Ibid.*

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proposed institution shall be something more than a mere intellectual character."<sup>83</sup> Obviously, it was to be an education addressing itself to the problems of apostasy and disloyalty to the British among the Sikhs. The movement for Khalsa College and 'Sikh education' aimed at producing men expected to be true to their religion, and true to the salt of their British masters by remaining ignorant of 'agitationary principles' was in the making.

The tendency of the *Civil and Military Gazette* of describing every anti-British move as Bengali inspired and of tracing every such move to the lack of religious instruction in the Bengal system of education was aimed at creating regional and religious sentiments against Bengal. It also meant the rejection of secular education. Above all it was an encouragement to the demand for denominational education. The education was to be organized mainly religio-community-wise, making even the region of little consequence.

The tendency was given a finishing touch by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. In 1888, he came openly against the Indian National Congress. In his famous Lucknow speech he condemned it by calling it an organization of the Bengalis. Certainly, he was speaking in the language of the *Civil and Military Gazette* while denouncing the Indian National Congress as a political mischief done by the Bengali *babus* to cause harm to the loyal Muslims and brave Rajputs, and Marathas.<sup>84</sup> However, the Sayyid was not alone and had his counterparts in the Khalsa Diwan. Once again no person was to be more happy than the editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* over the Khalsa Diwan Lahore's boycott of the Congress in 1888.<sup>85</sup> On November 8, 1888, the *Gazette* reads :

The action of the Mussalmans and now of the Sikhs in denouncing the Congress move in the Punjab greatly strengthens the hands of the government in opposing the flood of Bengali sedition and the Bengali *Ummedwars* that threaten to devour this province alive... The protest of the Mussalman and Sikh against the Congress agitation is the protest of the Punjab against the Bengali Pleague. We have now very good hope that the Punjabi Hindu will see on which side his interests lie, and will join his fellow countrymen of the Punjab.

83. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1884.

84. Shan Mohammed, *The Aligarh Movement*, Vol. III, Meerut, 1978, p. 994.

85. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, November 8, 1888.

## IV

The Lahore Singh Sabha came into existence on November 12, 1879, against a historical background of the introduction of Gurmukhi Panjabi at the Oriental College during 1877-78 as well the heightened educational controversy over the issue of the Panjab University during 1877-79.

The development of Punjabi had acquired some urgency for the British administration in the wake of the rise of Namdhari movement among the Sikhs of Punjab in the 1860's. Feeling the necessity of better knowing the Sikh tradition so that it could be able to handle the community rightly, the Government had hired the services of Ernest Trumpp to make available the Sikh scriptures in English. During the course of translation work, Trumpp<sup>86</sup> found the Sikhs hopelessly ignorant of their tradition. Certain Indian advisors of the Government, who were especially consulted in connection with Trumpp's mission to know as to from which part of the Sikh literature Ram Singh the Namdhari had derived his anti-establishment ideology, suggested that the Kuka creed was something new and unheard before even by the Sikhs. The Sikhs and non-Sikhs including a few Muslims were following the Kukkas out of ignorance. This ignorance had, thus, a political aspect. Trumpp had proposed a remedy to overcome this ignorance. The remedy was that Panjabi in the Gurmukhi should be developed 'as the national language of Punjab.' In 1873 was formed the Singh Sabha, Amritsar, with one of its objectives as 'the upliftment of Punjabi.' Leitner introduced Panjabi at the Oriental College in 1877-78. Doing so, he implemented the Singh Sabha's programme of cultivating Panjabi among the Sikhs so that they could be made aware of their religious beliefs.

Working on the educational theory of Leitner, the Singh Sabha Lahore opened a Gurmukhi School in 1880 in Lahore. It was the beginning of denominational education among the Sikhs. It was based upon the notion that education should be such that it could be helpful in preserving Sikhism and highlighting its distinct identity. The education should be given in Punjabi. The study of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script would, because of its close association with Sikh tradition and literature, revive Sikhism. The Sikh community should

86. See, E. Trumpp's Letter dated 13th January, 1873 to Under Secretary of State for India in Proceedings, Foreign Gen. A. July 1873, Nos. 34-37 (NAI).

87. See, "Copy of Notes of Conversation held with a view to ascertain if *Adi Granth* throws any light upon the political history of the Sikhs," in *Proceedings, Fore-Gen. A.*, January, 1874, No. 3 (NAI).

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be mobilised for the education of its members. The community should be made aware of its educational and religious backwardness which was causing its decline. For this, the community must have its own educational institutions. The government's help and the co-operation of European community should be sought for this purpose. As the active loyalty to the British regime would ensure this help, so all politics should be shunned.

In order to achieve this objective, the Sabha took two steps in 1880. First, an education committee was established. The committee included Europeans, mainly the British officials, as well as Indian 'Gentlemen.' Leitner was also on it. The Sabha supported his efforts of raising the Panjab University College to the University level. It acted unitedly with the Anjuman-i-Punjab in the defence of the educational policy of Punjab Government which was under attack by a section of the Lahore Indian Association, a faction of Anjuman-i-Punjab, and the Lahore Arya Samaj. When the Viceroy, Lord Ripon visited Lahore on November 11 and 12, 1880, a memorial favouring the Punjab Government's decision to convert the college into university was submitted. The 'Memorial' was on behalf of "The Anjuman-i-Punjab and kindered Associations." The latter referred to Anjuman-i-Islamia, Kasur Anjuman and the Singh Sabha Lahore. The common 'memorial' expressed the hope that the Panjab University would provide an education imbued "with those religious and moral principles which existing in all creeds, are most consistent with true progress, and without which the Anjuman has always maintained secular instruction in vain, if not pernicious."<sup>88</sup> Thus, Singh Sabha Lahore started its activities as one of the 'kindered Associations' of Leitner's Anjuman-i-Punjab. The Sabha's object was "to spread enlightenment among the Sikh community by means of the Punjabi language, to extend female education, and to raise a population that has ever been foremost in its loyalty to the British Crown by the improved cultivation of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country."<sup>89</sup> Leitner worked for the Sabha for six years from 1880-85.

Secondly, Bhai Gurmukh Singh brought out a Panjabi weekly, *Gurmukhi Akhbar*, for propagating ideas underlying the Singh Sabha. Its first issue came out in the first week of December 1880. It was the beginning of Sikh journalism committed to mobilize the Sikh community for its educational and religious needs. Bhai Gurmukh

88. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, Nov. 13, 1880, p. 5.

89. *Ibid.*

Singh also came into contact with Leitner who appointed him as an instructor of Mathematics at the Oriental College in 1881.

The year 1881 also saw an agitation organized by a faction of Indian Association, Lahore, and the Lahore Arya Samaj against the Punjab Government's decision to convert Panjab University College into Panjab University. Public meetings were organised in Amritsar, Lahore and Rawalpindi and memorandums were drawn and submitted against the education policy of the Punjab Government. However, Leitner and his supporters started a counter-agitation in favour of the promotion of the college to university.<sup>90</sup>

The Singh Sabha Lahore lent its support to Leitner, and its organ, *Gurmukhi Akhbar*, wrote in the defence of Punjab University College. It drew a sharp adverse comment from *The Tribune*, Lahore, which remarked on August 27, 1881 that it would be enough to say that "Dr Leitner is a great patron, if not the President of that body."<sup>91</sup> The University agitation continued to develop, and the Sabha submitted a memorial demanding the starting of the teaching of Panjabi at the University. It was bitterly opposed by *The Tribune* that virtually declared Lahore Singh Sabha as a creation of Leitner.<sup>92</sup>

The Panjab University was established in 1882. In the same year the Hunter Commission on Education was appointed. However, by this time educational controversy in the Punjab had thrown up some fundamental issues such as the question of 'nationality' and 'loyalty.' To this was added the language issue which once again came to the fore in face of the revived Urdu-Hindi controversy in northern India. The different organisations, such as the Anjuman-i-Punjab, the Lahore Singh Sabha, Indian Association and the Arya Samaj had actually been drawn into these deepening educational and language controversies. The question of language was linked up with 'nationality' issue. But the 'nationality' was identified with community based upon religion. Communal bodies (Bhasha Pracharni Sabhas) were formed to champion the cause of this or that language.

90. *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 27, 1881; *The Tribune*, Lahore, August 27, 1881.

91. *The Tribune*, Lahore, August 27, 1881.

92. On October 23, 1881, *The Tribune* reads :

The Sabha is a creature of Dr Leitner. The Doctor was at one time its president and laid the few un-educated Sikhs who are its members under a deep obligation by establishing a class in his Oriental College for the preparation of Bhais or Sikh priests and by making arrangements for the worship of *Granth Sahib* in the college premises with flowers and *karrah parsad*. Some of the leading members of the Sabha again are servants of Dr Leitner's College.

## COLONIAL EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB, 1865-1885

If the Anjuman-i-Islamia, Lahore, demanded Urdu, the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj agitated for Hindi. Panjabi was rejected by all save Leitner and the Singh Sabha.

The language was seen as a vehicle of communal solidarity at the intra-community level. Leitner showed in 1883, how the different sections among the Hindus had come together to form Hindi agitation.<sup>93</sup>

If the Hindi demand was a manifestation of the Hindu aspirations for social and political consolidation of Hindu community, the Sikh demand for Panjabi in the Gurmukhi script was based upon the Sikh view that "from the development of their sacred language, not only educational, but also social and physical benefits are expected to flow."<sup>94</sup>

Unfortunately, Leitner did not stop just there. He had been working for the recognition of the Sikhs as a community with a religion separate from that of the Hindus, and he had successfully established the identification of Panjabi in the Gurmukhi script as the sacred language of the Sikhs. This religio-linguistic separatism which was to find expression by the ideology of the Singh Sabha, Lahore, was informed through the Oriental College.

Leitner had a communal approach to language and nationality<sup>95</sup> as is clear from his interpretation of Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi in his own way. For this reason he could not and did not question the process of communalisation of language issue set into motion by the Brahmo Samaj on behalf of the Hindus, and by Sayyid Ahmed Khan's Aligarh Movement on behalf of the Muslims in north India.

This is clear from Leitner's advice to the Government to strengthen the Sikhs through education as the pillars of the Empire. The advice also provides a key to the political theory underlying Punjab education policy. This theory can be understood better in the background of the rise of a politically conscious student community in Lahore. We have already referred to the student meetings and the interpretation of these meetings by the imperialist press. According to this interpretation, loyalty to the British was the part of the 'Sikh national character.' However, the Sikh educated youth was losing this characteristic by learning 'agitationary principles' as indicated by Bhai Ditt Singh's participation in students' movement against the

93. G.W. Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab*, Patiala, 1971, pp. 47-48.

94. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 36.



government. The existing system of government education was seen as causing this deviation by depressing religious sentiments. This system of education was leading to both apostasy and disloyalty. A different education aimed at checking this twin evil of apostasy and disloyalty was the need of the hour. This 'new education' was to be partly religious and was to be imparted by the community itself. For this the community was to be encouraged for opening its own educational institutions. It was this interpretation which served as the basis of Singh Sabha ideology, particularly its demand for Khalsa educational institutions and 'Sikh national education.'

The Lahore Singh Sabha held a two day conference on 31st January and the 1st February, 1885, to celebrate its anniversary. The conference was held at the Shiksha Hall, Lahore. The Hall was decorated with "loyalty, strength, knowledge, improvement shown in golden letters from four flags."<sup>96</sup> On the first day, it was addressed by Bai Jawahir Singh, Vice-President, Lahore Arya Samaj, by Bhai Nikka Singh, a clerk in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, by G.W. Leitner and M.A. Macauliffe.

Bhai Jawahir Singh made "an appeal to other classes of the people who he said had left the Sikhs behind in the race of progress to help the latter out of their present ignorant condition..."<sup>97</sup>

About Leitner's role in the conference, *The Tribune* observed :

The promise of Dr Leitner to help the Sikh movement in the Panjab University at his own expense, if the University did not take it up, was very graciously held-out and was reported more than once. The Sikhs might feel much obliged to the Doctor for it and may well entertain a hope that it may not remain unredeemed. But will the Senate agree to the University being turned a place for the propagation of sectarian teachings ?<sup>98</sup>

On 18th February, Singh Sabha, Sialkot held its annual conference which was attended by 4000 people including the Europeans. Leitner was the main speaker on the occasion. The Sabha decided to start a Khalsa School.<sup>99</sup>

A few week later, the Khalsa Diwan Lahore, presented the following address to the Viceroy :

96. *The Tribune*, Lahore, February 7, 1885.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1885.

## COLONIAL EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB, 1865-1885

The object of our Khalsa Diwan, together with its subordinate local Sikh societies, is to enlighten, improve and reform our community, which is in a backward state from an educational and religious point of view.

In order to give a practical shape to our efforts we are about to establish a national institution in which instruction will be imparted based upon religion and morality, and in which Science, Arts and Agriculture will also be taught.

The movement has become now truly a national one, the enlightened Raja Bikrama Singh of Faridkot, his Highness the Raja of Kapurthala, an influential Sikh religious Head, Baba Khem Singh EIE and prominent Sikh chiefs such as Sardar Bikrama Singh CSI, Sardar Attar Singh CIE, Sardar Man Singh, Sardar Sujan Singh and others have consented to become patrons, Vice-patrons and presidents respectively of our Association, and Lahore societies, each in his own sphere, to help the national cause and we hope that other chiefs will also follow their good example.<sup>100</sup>

But still the Diwan would, says the address, need 'the advice and aid of our parental government.'<sup>101</sup> The Diwan was also thankful to its European supporters, especially 'our old friend, Dr G.W. Leitner.'<sup>102</sup> The address marked the beginnings of the Khalsa College Amritsar Movement.

100. *Ibid.*, April 18, 1885.

101. *Ibid.*

102. *Ibid.*

## The Most Controversial Sikh Coin

SURINDER SINGH\*

The coin struck in the name of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia from Lahore in 1758 or 1761 has been the most controversial Sikh coin, more so because no such coin is forthcoming. The controversy on this coin started fairly soon after its striking, which has been picked up by almost every historian of Sikh history and every numismatist studying Sikh coins. The real significance of this coin at this stage does not lay in its having been struck or not, whether it was struck with Jassa Singh's approval or otherwise; whether it was a mischief played by the local qazis and mullahs to instigate the Afghan invader against the Sikhs or a presentation of 21 coins as a *nazrana* presented by the noted citizens to the Sikh Commander for withholding his forces from sacking the town as has been the wont of every conqueror; whether it was momentary euphoria of the victorious Sikh army over the capture of Lahore after a period of nearly 750 years of foreign occupation.<sup>1</sup> The real importance of this coin as well as the controversy thereon lay in its contribution to the exposition of the concept of Sikh sovereignty as held in the second half of eighteenth century of which these coins have been the most representative symbol.

By the mid eighteenth century, large areas in Panjab had come under Sikh domination. They had organised themselves into a regular force under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia.<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, the Sikhs had evolved a loose confederacy. They set up mud-forts and fortresses all over Panjab, especially in the midst of Sikh population as rallying centres to organise their operations.<sup>3</sup> They had also erected a number of such forts in the Himalayan foothills as places of refuge in the case of Afghan persecution.<sup>4</sup> Their system of 'collection of Rakhi' had

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\*2119, 15-C, Chandigarh.

1. Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1978, p. 174.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

4. *Ibid.*, Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India*, Oxford, 1965, p. 166.

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become a far more effective means of revenue collection receiving better and willing response from cultivators and *zamindars* than that of the farmers of revenue collection for Mughal and Afghan rulers.<sup>5</sup> The entire Panjab was virtually under control of the Sikhs and the time was ripe for their occupation of the State capital, Lahore and assumption of fullfledged sovereignty. Sikhs had helped Adina Beg in expelling Afghans from their outposts. They had attacked Timur Shah near Sanaur and relieved him of half of his treasure and again attacked him at Malerkotla.<sup>6</sup> They had also attacked the retreating flanks and baggage train of Ahmed Shah Abdali at Goindwal ferry on Beas river, where they rescued a large number of captive men and women and sent them to their homes.<sup>7</sup>

Ahmad Shah after defeating Marathas at the famous third battle of Panipat in January 1761, left for Aghanistan in May 1761 leaving Khawaja Obed Khan Governor of Lahore and Zain Khan, Governor of Sarhind. Immediately after Ahmed Shah's departure, Sikhs started occupying areas under Afghan Governors. Mirza Khan incharge of Char Mahal came out to fight the Sikh forces but was defeated and killed.<sup>8</sup> Bikram Khan of Malerkotla was defeated and the town sacked. On receipts of these disturbing news, Ahmed Shah sent a trusted general Nur-ud-Din with a well trained force to chastise the Sikhs, but was defeated at Sialkot by Charat Singh, from where he fled back leaving his army at the mercy of Sikh forces.<sup>9</sup> Khawaja Obed Khan invaded Gujranwala in September 1761 and laid siege of the fort. In the meantime other Sardars came to the help of Charat Singh and in turn besieged Obed Khan. Obed Khan made a hasty retreat leaving behind huge quantity of arms and ammunitions, camels, horses and other camp equipment to the Sikhs.<sup>10</sup> Thus, in a short span of about four months, Sikhs had subdued all the Afghan chiefs set up by Ahmed Shah and practically the entire Panjab was again under their control.

In October 1761, Sikhs assembled at Amritsar to celebrate Diwali. They held a meeting of the *Sarbat Khalsa* wherein they passed

5. James Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindustan*, London, p. cxxi; James Browne, "History of the Origin and Progress of Sikhs" in *India Tracts*, London, 1787, p. VII.

6. Hari Ram Gupta, *op. cit.*, pp. 138, 144.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

8. Tahmas Khan Miskin, *Tazkirah Tahmas Miskin*, 1780 quoted by Hari Ram Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

9. Hari Ram Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

a *gurumata* to punish Aqil Das of Jandiala and occupy Lahore in order to establish their supremacy all over Panjab.<sup>11</sup> Sikhs marched to Lahore under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and laid siege of the city. Obed Khan, the Governor shut himself in the fort and would not face the Sikh forces. He was later got killed in a skirmish with the Sikhs. The leading citizens appreciating the weakness of the Governor and after negotiating with the Sikh Commander, opened the city gates to the Sikh forces, thus saving the city from sack and plunder. The Sikhs in the joy of having captured Lahore are said to have seized the royal mint and struck a rupee with the legend.

*Sikka zad dar jehan bafazal e-Akal*  
*Mulk-e-Ahmad garift Jassa Kalal.*<sup>12</sup>

The coin struck in the world by the grace of Akal in the country of Ahmad captured by Jassa Kalal.

Besides the striking of the said coin, its date is also being disputed. James Browne has stated that Sikhs expelled Timur Shah and Jehan Khan from Lahore, occupied the city and struck a coin in the name of their leader Jassa Singh Ahluwalia in 1758.<sup>13</sup> Browne has based his account in *Risala-i-Nanak* which he received from Budh Singh Arora and Ajaib Singh of Malerkotla<sup>14</sup> whom he met in Delhi in 1783, during his stay at the Mughal court from 1782 to 1785.<sup>15</sup> A number of later historians viz. Lt. Col. Malcolm, Elphinstone,

11. *Ibid.*, Aqil Das of Jandiala was the Guru of a dissenting sect of Niranjani, whose ancestors were Sikhs, but he was vehemently opposed to them and had been always aiding the enemies of Sikhs. He had invited Ahmad Shah and given clue of the location of the Sikh camp to the Afghans.
12. Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, *Khazana-i-Amira* (1762-63), 1871, pp. 113-14.
13. James Brown, *op. cit.*, p. VII.
14. Both Hari Ram Gupta and Ganda Singh have stated that Budh Singh and Ajaib Singh were natives of Lahore. Browne met them at Delhi in 1783 and persuaded them to let him have a translation thereof in Persian Language, abridging it as much as possible without injuring its essential purpose of information. Browne considered it extremely defective in the regular continuation of dates and thus not deserving to be called an historical account.
15. James Browne was sent by Warren Hastings, in 1782, to Lucknow to meet Nawab Vazir Asaf-ud-Daula and thereafter proceed to Mughal court at Delhi with his recommendations to watch the interests of British East India Company. Warren Hastings left India in Feb. 1785 and immediately thereafter Browne was recalled by the acting Governor General. It was during this stay of about three years that Browne came in contact with Budh Singh and Ajaib Singh and wrote his account of Sikhs upto March 1785 and the same was published in 1787.

### THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL SIKH COIN

Cunningham, Latif, Narang etc.<sup>16</sup> have based their accounts on the observations made by Jame's Browne without having put forth any new or contemporary evidence. A serious scholar of history states that in 1758 Panjab was leased out to Adena Beg by the Marathas for an annual tribute of seventy five lakhs<sup>17</sup> and Sikhs could not have assumed control of the State Capital, Lahore. He assigns the date for the said event as November 1761.<sup>18</sup> In November 1760, ten thousand Sikhs had invaded Lahore but had left after receiving a *nazrana* of thirty thousand rupees from the Governor of Lahore for 'Karah Parshad.'<sup>19</sup> He primarily bases his inference on Ghulam Ali Khan Azad's account *Khazana-e-Amtra* written in 1762-63 deeming it to be the most reliable record. It has been stated therein that Sikhs killed the Durrani Governor of Lahore, captured the capital and issued this coin. It was due to these doings of the Sikhs that Ahmad Shah invaded India in early 1762 and inflicted a severe defeat on the Sikhs, massacring about 12000 Sikhs.<sup>20</sup> N.K. Sinha does not accept the above evidence as satisfactory. Taking into account all the facts of the past few years, we are inclined to agree with Hari Ram Gupta that the date of striking the said coin in all probability should be taken as late as 1761 and not 1758 as recorded by Browne and others. However this aspect is a very minor part of the controversy.

The real issue is the striking of the said coin by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. The various viewpoints have been taken into account for a proper analysis of the issue. James Browne states in 1767 that Jassa Singh Ahluwalia commander of the Sikh army expelled the amildars of Ahmad Shah from the city and Subah of Lahore, became so popular that he ventured to strike rupees at the mint of Lahore in his own name.<sup>21</sup> But after these had been current for fifteen years the 'grand diet' of the Sikh chiefs called 'gurmata' determined to call in all those rupees to strike them in the name of Guru Nanak and

16. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, Reprint, Chandigarh, 1981. p. 75; Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Kabul*, Vol. II, London, 1815, p. 289; J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, Reprint, New Delhi, 1972. p. 89; Seyed Mohd. Latif, *History of Panjab*, Reprint, Ludhiana, 1989, p. 230; G.C. Narang, *Transformation of the Sikhs*, Lahore, 1912, p. 236.
17. Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, pp. 144-45, 173.
18. Hari Ram Gupta, "The First Sikh Coin of Lahore," in *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 1938, p. 430.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68.
20. Ghulam Ali Khan Azad, *op.cit.*, p. 114.
21. Ganda Singh, "History of Origin and Progress of Sikhs" by James Browne, in *Indian Studies Past and Present*, Vol. II, 1960-61, p. 555.

Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>22</sup> He further states that he had several of these coins in his possession.<sup>23</sup>

Firstly Browne's presumption that coin was struck in 1758 does not seem to be correct. Secondly, his statement that 'grand Diet' withdrew it after 15 years of its circulation has not been supported by any evidence. The Sarbat Khalsa did decide in 1765 to occupy Lahore and strike a coin in the name of the Gurus as a symbol of sovereignty. Had the said coin been in circulation even for seven years, its withdrawal would have got mention in the *gurmata* of 1765. Browne's dates are therefore *prima facie* in-correct. It has been universally admitted by all historians that in the prevailing circumstances only small number of coins would have been struck. The occupation of Lahore by Sikhs was for a few months in 1758 and Ahmad Shah had again come in 1759. The Sikh Commonwealth had no mechanism of withdrawing such coins more so when Lahore was not under their occupation from 1758 to 1765, even otherwise they could have withheld further striking of the said coin but could not have withdrawn the coins already struck and issued. Browne's statement that several of these coins were in his possession seems to be a figment of imagination. It is unbelievable that he could secure several of these coins in 1783-85 from Delhi, when the hobby of coin collection had not even been started and these few odd coins could not have reached Delhi in large numbers so that Browne could collect several of these. Even if we believe his word, he was immediately thereafter recalled and went back to England. He certainly would not have thrown away these coins and some of them would certainly have entered the collections of various museums in Europe, but none such coin has been located anywhere in the world. James Browne's account is at best a presumption only without any authentic evidence in support thereof.

Hari Ram Gupta, is most emphatic in his assertion that coins were struck by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia in 1761. He has stated "that in a fit of enthusiasm and delight the Sikhs fulfilled the wishes of their revered leader Late Nawab Kapur Singh by declaring Jassa Singh Ahluwalia as *Padshah*, then seizing the royal mint they struck the first Sikh rupee....it translated their ideal into actuality and fulfilled the prophecy of the last Guru.... In the heat of the passion of having attained this glory, after hardest struggle for more than half a century, bubbling over with their success and flushed with the pride

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, p. 581; N.K. Sinha, *Rise of Sikh Power*, Calcutta, 1973, p. 55,

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of victory, they let them pass beyond the bounds of reason and thus they glorified the victor who had led them from one conquest to another for about a dozen years past. That the mistakes, made in the highest excitement of the hour, was realised in sane, cooler and calmer moments is evident beyond all doubts."<sup>24</sup> There is, of course, the contemporary account of *Khazana-e-Amira* which does lend support to his assertion. Hari Ram Gupta has taken greater shelter under strong emotional words rather than hard evidence. His reference to the wishes of late Kapur Singh and prophesy of Guru Gobind Singh are irrelevant to the issue and are no evidence. His assertion that it was due to the momentary jubilation takes away most of the authority behind the said coin and it also stands partially destroyed in his own words when he deems it to be against the Sikh ethos and the concept that sovereignty belonged to the Khalsa and no single individual. He has locked horns with N.K. Sinha in a rather impleasant debate,<sup>25</sup> which has been denied by N.K. Sinha.<sup>26</sup>

Hari Ram Gupta has said, "The Sikhs seem to doubt as to the striking of these coins because no Sikh writer except Gian Singh has mentioned this fact in his work."<sup>27</sup> He thereafter constructs half a dozen imaginary doubts and then tries to demolish them with his arguments.<sup>28</sup> This attempt has been rather uncharitable on his part. Certain Sikh historians viz. S.S. Bal, G.S. Chhabra, have also shared H.R. Gupta's views.<sup>29</sup> Any further discussion of Hari Ram Gupta's doubts is not necessary and would not contribute to the solution of the controversy. In the absence of any such coin having been located, *Khazana-e-Amiras'* evidence, which does not mention the legend cannot be taken as authentic and final, as instances do exist where such like contemporary evidence has proved to be incorrect. A contemporary, Ahmad Yadgar stated that before the second battle of Panipat, Hemu threw off his allegiance to his master Adil Shah and struck coins in his own name. No such coin has survived and in the light of modern research Ahmad Yadgar's statement stands

24. Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, pp. 428, 432.

25. *Ibid.*, footnote; p. 431.

26. N.K. Sinha, *op.cit.* p. 55. "It must be admitted that it is difficult to deny the fact of coinage, and I have nowhere done it." But even if these coins were struck, would it be proper to assert that they were authorised official issues of the Sikh commonwealth ?

27. Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 431.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 431.

29. S.S. Bal, "The Sikh Struggle for Independence and the place of Sovereignty in Sikh Polity" in *the Medieval Indian State*, Chandigarh. 1968, p. 128; G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of Punjab*, Vol. I. Jalandhar, 1968, p. 639.



disproved.<sup>30</sup> A news writer of Jaipur court wrote in 1710 that Sikhs under Banda Bahadur made a seal with the legend.<sup>31</sup>

*Azmat-i-Guru Nanak, ham zahir-o-ham batin ast, Badshah-i-din-o-duniya ap Sacha Sahib ast.*

Another contemporary account *Haqiqat-e-Aqalim*<sup>32</sup> by Murtaza Hussain states that Banda Bahadur struck coins with the above legend, whereas the actual seal imprint and a few coins of Banda Bahadur that have been located use different legends<sup>33</sup> and hence both the above two accounts stand disproved. In view of the above instances, the account in *Khazana-e-Amira*<sup>34</sup> cannot be heavily leaned upon to establish the striking of the coin by Jassa Singh and the contention of Hari Ram Gupta cannot be given any more authenticity beyond its also being a presumption only.

Ganesh Das Badhera in *Chahar Bagh-i-Panjab*<sup>35</sup> written in 1849 states that local *qazis* and *mullahs* struck 21 such coins and sent them to Ahmad Shah to instigate him against the Sikhs. Ganesh Das has not given any contemporary evidence in support thereof and thus, it is another presumption only. Later historians have taken his view into account in further thrashing the controversy but have not made any new contribution there to. Khushwaqt Rai in *Kitab-i-Tarikh-i-Panjab*<sup>36</sup> written in 1811, states that the coin enjoyed a short span of life because its circulation was stopped on account of the contempt held by Sikhs in the use of half name of their leaders which was imprinted on the coin. This statement too has no contemporary evidence in support thereof. It is a rehash of Browne's view with some modification. Ahmad Yadgar, in his *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*<sup>37</sup> written in 1835 has stated that Sikhs felt distressed on the credit of their victory being given to an individual and not to the Gurus. Consequently they stopped the circulation of the said coin and struck

30. N.K. Sinna, *op.cit.*, p. 55.

31. 'Akhbar-at-i-Darbar-i-Muala,' Old Historical Records, Jaipur account dated 6th July, 1710, p. 39.

32. Murtaza Hussain, *Haqiqat-e-Aqalim* Aligarh, p. 148.

33. The seal imprint bear the legend 'Deg Teg Fateh' adopted on Sikh coins in 1765 and onwards and the legend on the few rupees traced so far is that of 'Sikka Zad bar har do alam' adopted on Amritsar rupee of 1775 and onwards.

34. *Khazana-e-Amira*. (As above in f.n. 20)

35. "Risala-e-Sahib Nama," p. 210 quoted by Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 178.

36. Khushwaqt Rai, "Kitab-i-Tarikh-i-Panjab," folio 104, quoted by Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs, op. cit.*, p. 177.

37. Yadgar Ahmad, "Tarikh-i-Salatin-e-Afghana," p. 173, quoted by Hari Ram Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

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another coin in the name of their Gurus. He has not cited any contemporary evidence in support thereof. The account of Khushwaqt Rai and Ahmad Yadgar suffer from the same infirmity as that of Browne in the withdrawal of the said coin by the Sikh authorities.

Ganda Singh, another noted historian of Sikhs, has written a detailed biography of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia,<sup>38</sup> but has not paid necessary attention to the controversy over this coin. He has brushed aside the same as not deserving any further discussion in view of the disinclination of the Sikhs to the use of half name for any Sardar. Lepel Griffin<sup>39</sup> in his book *Rajas of Punjab* written in 1865 has stated that these coins must have been struck in very small numbers. He further states that Raja of Kapurthala does not possess any such coin, nor could he contact any one who had seen this coin. The matter was taken up with the present head of Kapurthala house Brig. Sukhjit Singh. He has, stated in 1980 that "with regards to the coins purported to have been struck by Baba Jassa Singh, there was, to the best of my knowledge, one such coin in the former Kapurthala treasury."<sup>40</sup> The said coin is no longer traceable with the successor Panjab Government. This only creates doubts on Griffin's assertion and does not lead us nearer to any solution.

Taking into account the prevailing situation in its various aspects, a presumption, not taken into account so far by any historian strikes our mind. In late 1761, the Sikhs had besieged the Lahore city and the Governor had locked himself in the fort and there being no opposing forces, the fall of the city to the Sikhs was imminent. Keeping in view the sack of the city, a general wont of the conquerers for plunder, the leading citizens started negotiations with the Sikh commander and opened the city gates to the Sikh forces thus saving the city from ruinations.

In November 1750 also, about 10,000 Sikhs had besieged the city of Lahore and Mir Mohammad, the Governor shut himself in the fort. Sikhs had cut off all means of communications and were going to breach the city walls. The fall of the city and its sack by the Sikhs having become imminent, the leading citizens persuaded the Governor to pay 30,000 rupees from the state revenues to the Sikhs for 'Karah

38. Ganda Singh, *Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia*, Patiala, 1990, p. 110.

39. Lepel Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, Patiala, 1970 (re-print), p. 461.

40. Sikhjit Singh Brig, his letter dated 20th May, 1980 in reply to author's letter dated 21st March, 1980 over the existence of Jassa Singh's coin with the Kapurthala family.

Parshad' and thus persuaded the Sikh forces to withdraw the siege.<sup>41</sup> Cash *nazranas* would have been paid to the victorious Sikh army as was the practice in those times. It is our presumption that the leading citizens might have struck 21 coins as a token of their gratitude and acceptance of the suzerainty of the great Sikh commander over the city. The number twenty one is considered auspicious for non-Muslims and has no meaning for Muslims. The legend is in fair conformity to the existing Mughal and Afghan legends on their coins, wherein use of half names has been a common practice. The couplet seems to be the work of a Mughal mint master and quite appropriate to the occasion and its likely violation of Sikh traditions may not have been in the knowledge of the mint officials. Jassa Singh would have accepted the coins and would have got them broken up later on. In a similar case Sultan Muhammad Khan bin Musa Khan has stated in his *Tarikh-i-Sultani* that Shah Shujah got a presentation coin in honour of Alexander Burnes and the British East India Company with the couplet :

“*Sikka zad bar sim-o-tilla Shah Shujah Armini,  
Nur-i-chashm Lord Burnes khak-i-pa Kampani*”

meaning that coins of silver and gold were struck by Shah Shujah, the Arminian, the light of the eyes of Lord Burnes and the dust under the foot of the Company. Shah Shujah was the protege of the British and was being set up as the ruler of Afghanistan with the protection of the British forces sent under Alexander Burnes (assassinated by the rebel Afghans in 1841 at Kabul). The coin was obviously struck to please and humour Alexander Burnes and the British in a manner most derogatory and humiliating to the sovereign Afghan king.<sup>42</sup> In another somewhat similar situation Allard presented fifty silver coins to Ranjit Singh on Dussehra festival in 1836 which he had got made while on leave in France and these coins bore Ranjit Singh's name and title of 'wali of Panjab.'<sup>43</sup> Ranjit Singh accepted these coins and got them broken up as being violative of Sikh traditions. Hence it is quite likely that the leading citizens got these coins prepared from the royal mint as a *nazrana* to the Sikh commander and

41. Hari Ram Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

42. Sultan Muhammad Khan bin Musa Khan Durrani, "Tarikh-i-Sultani," quoted by Hans Herrli in his manuscript "The coins of the Sikhs" from an article of C.J. Rodgers published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* Vol. 57, No. 1 (1888).

43. Jatti Ram Gupta, "Dussehra Festival in Panjab during Sikh Rule 1800-1849." in *Sikh Review*, 1970, pp. 41-43.

## THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL SIKH COIN

with the passage of time the story got different hues and colours. This presumption seems to be more appropriate than the rest.

The most analytical and articulate assessment has been made by N.K. Sinha where he is unable to dispute with certainty the striking of the coin; he is quite convinced that Jassa Singh Ahluwalia would never have struck coins in his own name in violation of the Sikh traditions and concept of Sikh sovereignty. The idea that Jassa Singh imprinted on the coins of the Khalsa "*Mulk-i-Ahmed grift Jassa Kalal*" is highly absurd and absolutely unlikely.<sup>44</sup> The theocratic zeal and democratic spirit were far too deep rooted to allow any individual to do such a highly objectionable thing. Sikh democracy was such a living force in those days of Sikh struggle against Durrani, that no Sikh, howsoever highly placed, would dare flout the Khalsa in such a way. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, the ideal democratic leader, conspicuous for his spirit of self sacrifice was too faithful a follower of the commonwealth and too whole-souled a patriot to attempt to distinguish himself in a way so revolting to a Sikh.<sup>45</sup> Khushwant Singh has not given any cognisance to the striking of the said coin and makes only a passing reference thereto. He speaks of the 1765 coins in the name of Gurus having been issued on the victorious entry of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia at the head of Khalsa forces in Lahore city.<sup>46</sup>

The chances of tracing out the said Coin are becoming more and more extinct with the passage of time and the controversy of its having been struck or not amounts to the flogging of a dead horse and is a purposeless exercise from numismatic perspective. The true position can be ascertained only if any of the conflicting views finds its reflection from the actual coin, which unfortunately is not forthcoming, and hence the truth is perforce remaining elusive and the effort in its realisation going in vain.

All the historians who subscribe to the striking of the coin by Jassa Singh, appear to entertain a certain apprehension over its authenticity, which has resulted in the follow up account regarding its so called withdrawal by the Sikh commonwealth for one reason or the other. They seem to be reluctant to ignore a juicy anecdote regarding an extremely colourful event of Sikh heroic struggle and thus fail to test it on the touchstone of Sikh traditions and concept of Sikh sovereignty. It is praise worthy of N.K. Sinha to find it wanting

44. N.K. Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 54,

45. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

46. Khushwant Singh, *A History of Sikhs*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1987, pp. 152-53.

when measured in the balance of Sikh ethos and thus rejecting it as an unlikely and an absurd proposition. Even if for argument sake, we accept Hari Ram Gupta's contention that it was an action taken in euphoria of victory and without proper reasoning and thus had to be undone, it has to be treated as a momentary aberration on the body politics or an exception to prove the rule, that the Sikh sovereignty belonged to the Khalsa Panth as a sacred trust bequeathed to them by their Gurus and no Sardar nor even the acclaimed leader of the Dal Khalsa could make any pretention to it, much less, assuming it. This type of aberrations have been mentioned in Sikh history regarding Ranjit Singh having struck coins in the name of Moran or Hari Singh Nalwa having struck coins in his own name, but both of them have been found incorrect on detailed historical analysis and numismatic investigation thereof.

The objections like half name of a Sikh Sardar being objectionable have neither any basis nor any weight therein, as half names are common occurrences even in Sikh poetic literature. A very pertinent question as to whether these coins were the authorised issues of the Khalsa commonwealth remains unanswered in all the historical accounts. From the above analysis of the controversy it becomes abundantly clear, that there existed an unmistakable and persistent trend in Sikh polity during the period of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and thereafter that sovereignty belonged to the entire Khalsa Panth and its principal symbol, the coins could not be struck in anybody's name, howsoever mighty he may be, other than their Gurus, who had bequeathed the same to the Khalsa Panth. This controversy therefore indirectly contributes to the inherent strength and exposition of the concept of Sikh sovereignty.

## Progressive Aptitude of the Punjab Peasantry Under British Rule 1849-1901

SUKHWANT SINGH\*

In the fifties of the nineteenth century the peasant-proprietors of the Punjab began switching from traditional ways of cultivation to advanced techniques and commercialisation of agriculture. They adopted the improved varieties of the traditional crops and implements, appropriated new crops and implements in small quantities and increased the output steadily. The peasant-proprietors were more interested in the agricultural improvements than the non-cultivating proprietors and the tenants.<sup>1</sup> The agriculturists in general and the peasant-proprietors in particular gradually shifted from the relative subsistence to the commercial cultivation in response to the new market forces coming in the wake of the development of transportation, irrigation, higher prices of agricultural produce and high yielding varieties. The liberalisation of the tariff policy of the government led to a flourishing external trade in agricultural produce.

The Punjab heavily contributed to the growth of the agricultural exports of India. The major contribution of the Punjab was in wheat, oil-seeds and cotton. Their production was directly governed by the conditions of the European market. When favourable prices were anticipated the area under their cultivation was increased.<sup>2</sup> The Indian wheat in the 1870's was beginning to be greatly demanded in the European markets. Its demand increased steadily especially in England, France and Belgium.<sup>3</sup> It was second only to the Australian

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1. This was established by an inquiry into the standard of cultivation in the lands cultivated by the peasant-proprietors and the tenants. The inquiry was conducted by the Department of Co-operation through the inspectors of the co-operative societies in the beginning of the twentieth century. H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab : Being Some Studies in Punjab Rural Economics*, Lahore, 1922, pp. 89-95.
2. George Watt, *Memorandum on the Re-sources of British India*, n.p.c. 1894, p. 2.
3. In 1882-83 India exported 14.2 million cwts. of wheat. Of this England purchased 6.6 million, France 3.6 million and Belgium 1.4 million cwts : Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, February 1884, Nos. 1-4.

wheat.<sup>4</sup> The average annual exports of grains and pulses from the Punjab for the five years ending 1877-78 stood at 45,16,490 maunds. Of this wheat alone was 10,17,306 maunds while the remaining 34,99,184 maunds consisted of inferior grains and pulses.<sup>5</sup> The province made rapid strides as a wheat exporting region with the opening of the Sirhind Canal in 1882 and Chenab Canal in 1889. By the end of the nineteenth century the wheat production of the Punjab became an appreciable factor in the World's wheat market. With a maximum annual export of over 11,00,000 tons by 1910 the Punjab became the largest contributor towards the total wheat export of India.<sup>6</sup> The constantly increasing demand for oil-seeds especially from France, England and Belgium gave great stimulus also to their production. The Punjab supplied more than 25 per cent of the exports of rapeseed and mustard exported from India between 1886-87 and 1888-89.<sup>7</sup>

The Punjab came to be known as a country of wheat. In 1877 more than one thousand samples of Indian wheat were professionally examined in England under the direction of Forbes Watson, an agricultural expert. A comprehensive report on the results was subsequently submitted. A certain number on the best Indian samples were estimated at a value equal to the better kinds of Australian and American wheat. It was admitted that many parts of India adopted the cultivation of wheat of the finest quality. Forbes Watson found it difficult to reconcile this fact to the image of the Indian agriculturist in which one often heard of his ignorance and carelessness and the unchanging modes of his cultivation. He had no doubt about the existence of a numerous class of agriculturists all over India to whom such a reproach could not apply. It was impossible to avoid the conclusion that the cultivators who grew wheat as good as to the finest Australian wheat were keenly alive to the advantages of selection of seed and of careful cultivation; they were as good as the most

4. E.C. Schrottky, *The Principles of Rational Agriculture Applied to India and its Staple Products*, Bombay, 1876, pp. 203-04.
5. It is interesting to note the annual average of agricultural exports from the Punjab down the Indus registered at Mithankot from 1861-62 to 1867-68 was only 4,80,242 maunds: *Punjab Report in Reply to the Inquiries Issued by the Famine Commission*, Vol. I, Lahore, 1878-79, p. 104.
6. W.C. Renouf, *The Cultivation of Stronger and More Valuable Wheats for Export from the Punjab*, Lahore, 1910, p. 2.
7. *Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Punjab and Its Dependencies for the Year 1860-61* (cited hereafter as *PLRAR 1860-61*), Lahore, 1861, pp. 164-65, and Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, January 1891, No. 22.

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intelligent English farmers.<sup>8</sup>

The growth of export trade in cotton increased the acreage under cotton crop, particularly from 1860-61 onwards. The export of cotton in different years varied between one-fourth and one-half of the total production. In the pre-American Civil War period cotton cultivation was confined to about three lac acres.<sup>9</sup> In 1864-65, to meet the excessive foreign demand about nine lac acres were placed under cotton. In 1866-67, due to less demand the area under cotton declined to about six lac acres. Due to the steadily growing demand the annual area under cotton from 1894-95 to 1900-01 averaged around eleven lac acres.<sup>10</sup>

The rising export trade in agricultural produce induced the peasant-proprietors to adopt new crops and techniques. They took to cultivating the pure quality seed to get good prices.<sup>11</sup> The high-yielding varieties of wheat proved so profitable that the area under wheat and cotton cultivation increased both by the replacement of less remunerative crops and by bringing new area under cultivation.<sup>12</sup> W.C. Renouf, Director of Agriculture, Punjab, noticed that in response to the milling revolution in Europe the Punjab cultivators started to grow stronger wheats for which there was an active preferential demand.<sup>13</sup> Also, they fairly generally resorted to weeding, hoeing, sowing in lines, use of pure seed and improved implements. The rotation of crops became more or less scientific.<sup>14</sup>

Agrarian changes in the Punjab during the period of British rule varied considerably both in terms of time and space. There was differentiation in the growth of area under irrigation and cultivation as well as in that under different harvests and crops. The rate of development varied from locality to locality. In the already thickly

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8. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Home, Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture and Horticulture*, January 1880, No. 62.

9. *PLRAR, 1860-61*, pp. 157-58.

10. Himadri Banerjee, *Agrarian Society of the Punjab 1849-1901*, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 57-63 and 72-74.

11. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, February 1884, Nos. 1-4; *Ibid.*, January 1906, No. 1; and *PLRAR, 1860-61*, p. v.

12. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Home, Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture and Horticulture*, January 1880, No. 62.

13. W.C. Renouf, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

14. *PLRAR, 1860-61*, p. v; and *Land Revenue Settlement Report of the Rakh Branch Circle*, 1940, pp. 13-14.



populated areas, the percentage of growth was generally high in the early years of British rule and less towards the turn of the century. In the early decades of our period, the government measures like the construction of the Upper Bari Doab Canal, Sirhind Canal, remodelling of the Western Jamna Canal and the expansion of railways and roads, were concentrated in this region which helped in bringing bulk of the remaining culturable land under cultivation. This region comprising largely of the eastern plains had thus nearly reached the saturation point in terms of its population and extent of cultivation, and its subsequent growth of agriculture was rather slow.<sup>15</sup> In many arid districts, prior to the expansion of irrigation, the cultivated area increased in the years of favourable rainfall and decreased in the years of sparse rainfall.<sup>16</sup> Within the district also, the rate of growth varied from *tahsil* to *tahsil*.<sup>17</sup>

Within the canal irrigated area too, increase in different divisions, districts and *tahsils* was uneven. The percentage of the total crops grown by irrigation in 1896-97 in various divisions was Lahore 57, Derajat 41, Peshawar 35, Rawalpindi 31, Jalandhar 26 and Delhi 11.<sup>18</sup> Between 1878 and 1900, as compared to other districts,

15. Between 1868-69 and 1878-79, the cultivated area in Gurdaspur district, for example, increased by 39 per cent, while in the ten years ending 1901-02, the increase was only of 5 per cent : *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer 1883-84*, Statistical Table No. II; and *Imperial Gazetteer of India : Provincial Series; Punjab*, Vol. II, p. 64. In Rohtak district, the cultivated area between 1862 and 1878-79 increased by 34 per cent, while in the three succeeding decades, the increase was only of 3 per cent : *Rohtak District Gazetteer 1910*, p. 105. Similarly, in 1885, the cultivated area in Rawalpindi district showed an increase of 46 per cent over the period of the first regular settlement, but between 1885 and 1907, an increase only of 6 per cent was recorded : *Rawalpindi District Gazetteer 1907*, p. 138.
16. For example, in Hissar district the cultivated acreage in 1873-74 and 1868-69 increased by 5 per cent while in 1878-79 it decreased by 14 per cent : *Hissar District Gazetteer 1883-84*, Statistical Table No. II. Similarly, in Jhang District the cultivated area in 1888-89 decreased by 16 per cent on that of 1878-79. With the beginning of canal irrigation it rose about three times in 1898-99 : *Jhang District Gazetteer 1934*, Statistical Table No. I.
17. In Shahpur district, for example, increase in cultivated area in 1893 was more than double on that of 1864, but the percentage of increase in Shahpur *tahsil* was 173, in Bhera *tahsil* 131 and in Khushab *tahsil* 89 only : *Shahpur District Gazetteer 1897*, p. 148. In Ferozepore district between 1871 and 1913 Mukatsar and Fazilka *tahsils* showed nearly double the increase than the other *tahsils* : *Ferozepore District Gazetteer 1915*, p. 159. See also, *Attock District Gazetteer 1907*, p. 162-63; *Ibid.*, 1932, pp. 185-86; *Rawalpindi District Gazetteer 1907*, p. 138; *Amritsar District Gazetteer 1947*, p. 79; and *Gujrat District Gazetteer 1921*, p. 79.
18. *Report on the Famine in the Punjab in 1896-97*, Lahore, 1898, p. 4.

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the irrigated areas increased manifold in the districts of Ferozepore, Jhang, Amritsar, Lahore, Jalandhar, Multan, Gujranwala, Ludhiana, Peshawar and Muzaffargarh.<sup>19</sup> The accompanying table illustrate the position.<sup>20</sup>

Area of the Crops irrigated from all sources in different districts of the Punjab in 1878 and 1900

District	1878	1900	Increase or decrease
	Acres	Acres	Acres
Hissar	100,690	182,677	+ 81,987
Rohtak	118,634	119,977	+ 1,343
Gurgaon	190,746	202,797	+ 12,051
Delhi	193,865	198,132	+ 4,267
Karnal	266,365	328,936	+ 62,571
Ambala	175,876	79,015	— 96,861
Simla	627	886	+ 259
Kangra	164,398	175,814	+ 11,416
Hoshiarpur	26,286	114,785	+ 88,499
Jalandhar	224,179	411,670	+187,491
Ludhiana	119,322	295,968	+176,646
Ferozepore	180,910	810,473	+ 629,563
Multan	410,300	455,058	+944,758
Jhang	227,104	1,172,959	+945,855
Montgomery	240,592	273,410	+ 32,818
Lahore	455,140	682,509	+227,369
Amritsar	264,670	588,543	+323,873
Gurdaspur	122,600	247,740	+125,140
Sialkot	425,645	491,998	+ 66,353
Gujrat	92,141	193,490	+101,349
Gujranwala	389,443	648,702	+259,259
Shahpur	176,087	227,965	+ 51,878
Jehlam	31,649	38,147	+ 6,498
Rawalpindi	16,157	59,950	+ 43,793
Hazara	44,969	59,549	+ 14,580
Peshawar	217,387	424,701	+ 207,314
Kohat	35,948	33,671	— 2,277
Bannu	69,000	158,016	+ 89,016
Dera Ismail Khan	150,000	148,836	— 1,164
Dera Ghazi Khan	248,792	236,016	— 12,776
Muzaffargarh	256,534	313,593	+ 57,059
Total British Punjab	5,635,786	9,375,983	+3,740,197

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

20. *The Punjab Famine of 1899-1900*, Vol. I, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1901, Statement No. II B, pp. 16-17.

However, the biggest area of agricultural development was in the canal colonies. With the large scale canalisation and colonization from 1889 onwards, the western plains of the Punjab went ahead in agricultural expansion. Between 1890 and 1900, the cultivated area of the British Punjab showed an increase of 2,024,320 acres or 7.8 per cent. The main centre of this increase was the Chenab Canal Colony in which nearly 1,100,000 acres were brought under the plough during the decade ending 1899.<sup>21</sup> The gross cultivated area of the British districts between 1901 and 1911 increased from 28.11 million acres to 29.65 million acres. The greatest contributors to this increase were Lyallpur and Jhang districts with 589,573 acres, and Shahpur with 499,887 acres.<sup>22</sup>

With the spread of irrigation there was a considerable disparity in the rate of increase in the areas under the spring and autumn harvests. Between 1871 and 1894 the acreage under the spring harvest increased by 72.2 per cent and that under the autumn harvest by 13.5 per cent only.<sup>23</sup> There was moreover diversity of increase in the acreage under all crops. On the whole, the area under wheat, cotton, gram and oil-seeds (particularly *toria*) increased at a high rate, while the area under rice, sugarcane, vegetables, tobacco, fodder crops, maize and poppy showed smaller increase and the area under barley and indigo in fact decreased.<sup>24</sup> Oil-seeds began increasingly to be cultivated in the canal colonies. In 1910, *toria* alone covered 5 lac acres. The maximum progress in terms of the total areas, however,

21. H.A. Rose, *Report on the Census of India 1901*, Vol. XVII, Part I, Simla, 1902, p. 49.

22. Pandit Harikrishan Kaul, *Report on the Census of India 1911*, Vol. XIV, Part I, Lahore, 1912, p. 51. The districts covered by the canal colonies, whole or in part, were marked by excellent expansion of cultivation. The cultivated area in Jhang district between 1888-89 and 1903-04 increased by 459 per cent : *Jhang District Gazetteer 1934*, Statistical Table No. I.

23. Earlier, due to the lack of irrigation, the sowing of large area under spring crops was not possible as bulk of the rainfall fell in the autumn season. As irrigation grew the area under the spring harvest increased more : *Report on the Administration of the Panjab and Its Dependencies for the Year 1877-78* (all *Administration Reports* cited hereafter are prefixed as *PAR*), p.100; *PAR 1889-90*, p. 105; and *PAR 1894-95*, p. 111.

24. The growth of irrigation made the cultivation of more valuable crops possible on a larger scale while increase in their prices and high yield served as incentives to substitute the area under less valuable crops by the more valuable ones.

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was made in the cultivation of wheat.<sup>25</sup> The distribution of the crops matured under irrigation too was highly unequal.<sup>26</sup>

The extension of irrigation and the availability of cultivable land to be brought under cultivation were obviously the basic factors which determined the growth of agriculture in different regions. The most noteworthy characteristic of agricultural development thus was that it was primarily a development in the sense of increase in acreage under cultivation effected through the various irrigation projects. In other words, comparatively less attention was paid to intensive cultivation.

Assured of benefits, the Punjabi agriculturists enthusiastically purchased new implements of both Indian and foreign manufacture for the improvement of cultivation. More important among these were sugarcane-crushers, Persian wheels, ploughs, fodder-cutter,

25. Increase or decrease in the cultivation of various crops was as follows :

Area under various Crops in Thousand Acres				
Crop	1876	1921	Increase or decrease	Percentage of change
Oil-seeds	188	1,172	1,084	577
Cotton	668	1,540	872	131
Gram	2,272	3,873	1,601	70
Wheat	6,609	8,951	2,342	35
Rice	708	829	121	17
Sugarcane	356	412	56	16
Barley	1,874	1,099	— 775	— 41

*PAR 1877-78*, pp. 101-02; Pandit Harikrishan Kaul, *Report on the Census of India 1911*, Vol. XIV, Part I, p. 51; and L. Middleton, *Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I, Lahore, 1923, p. 10. For detail on all crops in various districts see the statistical tables in the District Gazetteers.

26. The following table gives percentage of the matured area under crops irrigated from various sources in the Punjab districts in 1921 :

1. Lyallpur	90	11. Sialkot	53	20. Gurgaon	17
2. Montgomery	87	12. Ferozepore	46	21. Hissar	16
3. Multan	87	13. Dera Ghazi Khan	43	22. Mianwali	12
4. Jhang	86	14. Ludhiana	37	23. Hoshiarpur	11
5. Lahore	78	15. Karnal	36	24. Attock	9
6. Muzaffargarh	77	16. Gujrat	36	25. Ambala	6
7. Gujranwala	76	17. Gurdaspur	28	26. Jehlam	5
8. Shahpur	75	18. Rohtak	27	27. Rawalpindi	2
9. Amritsar	70	19. Kangra	26	28. Simla	—
10. Jalandhar	54				

*F. Middleton, Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I, p. 11.

harrows and drills. The new iron sugarcane-crusher called Behia Mill rapidly superseded the native *velna* of cogged wooden wheels. The new sugarcane-crusher crushed more quantity and gave higher yield. The agriculturists purchased the new implement in large numbers. Introduced in 1874 it replaced totally the old crusher by the turn of the century.<sup>27</sup> The information collected by the Punjab government on its popularity affords strong evidence of the enthusiasm with which the peasant-proprietors regarded the new crusher as an economiser of the labour alike of cattle and men.<sup>28</sup> The encouraging response of the peasant-proprietors made the new crusher more successful in the Punjab than in other parts of India.<sup>29</sup> At first these were imported from Shahbad in Bengal, and Saharanpur and Roorkee in North-Western Provinces. But by 1890 large scale manufacture of iron sugarcane-crushers, among other better implements started in the Punjab Province at Delhi, Karnal, Nahan, Amritsar, Batala and Lahore. Similarly, the chaff-cutters used to be imported from Bombay. Being an implement of daily use it was in great demand. With the passage of time Batala emerged as a big centre of the manufacture of chaff-cutters in India.<sup>30</sup> The reports of the district officers in 1895 show that most of the new implements were thoroughly appreciated and were driving the old ones out.<sup>31</sup>

Following the new techniques of the sowing of crops, in much of the Punjab the use of drills for sowing seed increased greatly. Drill was a hollow tube fixed in the shaft of the plough through which the ploughman dropped the seed grain into the furrow. It was generally used for more valuable crops like wheat.<sup>32</sup>

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27. See, for example, *Karnal District Gazetteer, 1883-84*, pp. 162-63; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer, 1883-84*, pp. 56-57 and 62; *Amritsar District Gazetteer, 1892-93*, p. 94; *PAR 1897-98*, p. 159; *Imperial Gazetteer of India : Provincial Series : Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 59; and *Punjab Report in Reply to the Inquiries Issued by Famine Commission*, Vol. I, p. 193. The initial response of the Punjab peasants to the official efforts however was not very encouraging : *Punjab Report in Reply to the Inquiries Issued by Famine Commission*, Vol. I, p. 289; and Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture-A*, June 1877, No. 34.

28. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, July 1884, No. 4.

29. *Ibid.*, October 1886, No. 19.

30. *Ibid.*, September 1891, No. 25.

31. *Ibid.*, February 1895, No. 16.

32. *Ferozepore District Gazetteer 1883-84*, p. 67; and *Bannu District Gazetteer 1907*, p. 79.

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Efforts made in seed selection by the government were appreciated by the peasant-proprietors. The agriculturists in the canal colonies showed deep interest in the high-yielding varieties of crops.<sup>33</sup> According to F. Halsey, a British observer, the agriculturists of the Punjab appreciated the better crops and better methods of tillage as much as the British agriculturists. He gave evidence of his own fifty acre farm at Amritsar. The peasant-proprietors of the villages around eagerly tried to get seeds from his farm. This was not the end; they also made efforts to acquire the kind of implements used in the farm of F. Halsey.<sup>34</sup> The adaptation rate of high-yielding varieties was much higher in the Punjab in comparison with the other parts of India. In the beginning of the twentieth century the Punjab formed about 12 per cent of the area of British India, but had about one-third of the acreage under high-yielding varieties of crops. It had a large share in the better varieties of wheat and cotton.<sup>35</sup> Thousands of cultivators who had earlier never thought of the quality of the seed either themselves grew selected seeds or purchased them from others by the beginning of the present century.

Towards the end of the 19th century, a change in the pattern of marketing of agricultural produce was increasingly evident not only in the canal colonies but also in other districts. Considerable trade in the Malwa tract began to be carried by the peasant-proprietors themselves. Trade in the western part of Ludhiana district, for example, was entirely in the hands of the peasant-proprietors who brought the grain in their own carts and themselves disposed it off at Ludhiana to grain merchants and representatives of different firms. It was observed by the British officials that a peasant-proprietor would not part with his grain on the spot even if it was the custom for the merchants to go about the country for he expected to get a better price at Ludhiana.<sup>36</sup> The peasant-proprietors of the Ferozepore district, with the exception of those in

33. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, October 1904, No. 11.

34. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce : Agriculture and Horticulture*, December 1873, No. 4.

35. This can be substantiated by the illustration of acreage under high yielding varieties in different provinces. The total area under high yielding varieties of crops in British India in 1926-27 was 8.9 million acres. Out of this 3 million acres were in the Punjab alone followed by Bombay with 1.6 and United Provinces with 1.5 million acres. About 50 per cent of the better wheat and 41 per cent of cotton was cultivated in the Punjab alone; Vers Anstey, *Economic Development in India*, London, 1949 (3rd ed.), p. 527.

36. *Ludhiana District Gazetteer 1888-89*, pp. 159-60.

the riverain tract, took their grain to Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Lahore and Bahawalpur.<sup>37</sup> The agents of the European merchants in important centres also began purchasing the produce directly from the cultivators, let alone from traders and middlemen.<sup>38</sup> It reduced the profits of the middlemen, and a larger proportion of market price reached the pocket of the actual producers than before. In the early 20th century it became common for the peasant-proprietors, free from the clutches of the money-lender to bring their produce to the market and sell it for cash at the market price, instead of allowing the village shopkeeper to take it at a price fixed by himself.<sup>39</sup>

Among some sections of the agriculturists in the Punjab, industriousness, fearlessness and zeal for the improvement played an important role in marking the colonisation schemes of the government an unexpected success. The earliest attempt by the British government to found a colony within the boundaries of the British Punjab was made in 1818 in the Hissar district. But it proved to be a failure because the inhabitants of Bundelkhand chosen for this purpose did not like to settle in a distant country.<sup>40</sup> The experience in the Chenab Colony however was different. Before colonisation its area was a desolate waste land covered mostly with scrub forests. The aboriginal tribes were hostile and opposed to colonisation.<sup>41</sup> But these difficulties were overcome by the indomitable and adventurous spirit of the peasant-proprietors of the Punjab. The Chenab Colony showed a marvellous development. The area of Lyallpur district which was the most backward and desolate region of the Punjab in 1891 became the model of Punjab agriculture in 1901. Within one decade about 1.6 million acres of land were brought under cultivation in the Chenab Colony.<sup>42</sup> About 3,22,000 people migrated to the Chenab Colony from other districts of the Punjab. The density of population per square mile in this colony increased from 9 in 1891 to 181 in 1901.<sup>43</sup> The

37. *Ferozepore District Gazetteer, 1888-89*, p. 107.

38. *Lower Jehlam Canal Gazetteer 1920*, Lahore, 1921, p. 34.

39. James Wilson, *Recent Economic Developments in the Punjab*, Suffolk, 1910, pp. 13-14.

40. Deva Singh, *Colonization in the Rechna Doab*, Punjab Government Record Office Publications, Monograph No. 7, 1929, 1-2 and 11.

41. *PAR 1849-51*, pp. 2-4; *Gazetteer of the Punjab : Provincial Volume 1888-89*, p. 11; and M.L. Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, Delhi, 1977 (reprint), pp. 114-15.

42. Deva Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

43. L. Middleton, *Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I, Subsidiary Tables III and VII.

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peasant-proprietors held about 80 per cent of the colonised area in the Chenab Colony.<sup>44</sup> The achievement of the government in the Chenab Colony was largely the outcome of the response of the peasant-proprietors to the changing agrarian environment.

The extension of cultivation to the lands earlier graded as marginal and inferior could be made possible by the peasant-proprietors who were willing to cultivate additional land even as tenants.<sup>45</sup> In order to make their holdings economic many small owners either took more land for cultivation, if possible, or gave their own lands to neighbours and themselves worked purely as tenants on bigger holdings. Thus in the submontane and central districts like Ambala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Amritsar and Lahore it was the small size of holdings which placed more land under tenant cultivation.<sup>46</sup> In Jalandhar the decrease in area cultivated by proprietors was due to emigration to the canal colonies and foreign countries.<sup>47</sup> In Ludhiana district bulk of the arable waste land which existed at the time of annexation was brought under cultivation in the four decades after the annexation. In Karnal district it was due to the grant of waste lands to civil and military pensioners and due to the bringing of several estates formerly kept as grazing reserve under cultivation by the Mandal and Kunjpura families.<sup>48</sup> The decrease in the area cultivated by proprietors in the Hoshiarpur district was largely due to the ravages of the plague and emigration to the canal colonies, which obliged the proprietors to have recourse to the tenants.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, most of the newly broken land in the canal colonies was cultivated by tenants. The motivating factor here was the large size of holdings and the desire of big landowners to bring the maximum of their land under cultivation to produce more.<sup>50</sup> Increased tenant cultivation under such circumstances should not be regarded as a step towards feudalism but as a sign of transition towards capitalism which by then was gaining a foothold in the Punjab. The tendency to bring the earlier less cared for lands under

44. J.G. Beazley and F.H. Puckle, *The Punjab Colony Manual*, Vol. I, Lahore, 1926, p. 2.

45. Government of India, *Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Agriculture*, February 1886, No. 15.

46. William Robert and Kartar Singh, *A Text Book of Punjab Agriculture*, Lahore, n. d., pp. 515-16.

47. *Land Revenue Settlement Report of Jullundur District 1913-17*, p. 25.

48. *Land Revenue Settlement Report of Karnal District 1909*, p. 17.

49. *Land Revenue Settlement Report of Hoshiarpur District 1910-14*, p. 20.

50. *PAR 1894-95*, p. 13.



cultivation through tenants in most of the cases was the outcome of the desire to produce more and reap high profits than of abstaining from cultivation.

The agrarian society was composed of various strata of the holders of landed rights with corresponding agricultural resources, skill and enterprise. The peasant-proprietors conducted agricultural operations of their holdings primarily with their family labour and implements owned by themselves. The landlords on the other hand, gave land to others to cultivate as their tenants and generally took little interest in increasing the productivity of the soil. The insecurity of the tenure in case of the tenants, particularly tenants-at-will who constituted the majority, was a check on the utilisation of agricultural potential of the land cultivated by the tenants. Because of the nature of their respective rights and involvement in cultivation, it were not the landlords or tenants, but the peasant-proprietors who provided the basis for a highly productive agriculture in the Punjab.<sup>51</sup>

On the basis of the size of their holdings the peasant-proprietors may be divided into various strata ranging from the holders of less than one to fifty acres or more. Among the proprietors, 49.7 per cent owned less than five acres; 31 per cent owned over five but under fifteen acres; 14.4 per cent over fifteen but less than fifty; and less than six per cent, fifty acres and above.<sup>52</sup> Of these, those holding from five to fifty acres, formed 38 per cent of the total number of land-owners and held 62.2 per cent of the cultivated land in the Punjab in the

51. M.L. Darling, *op. cit.*, pp. 118, 121, 132 and 275-58. See also, 'The Way to Prosperity Through Rural India,' *Sunday Times*, Madras, n. d., p. 4; and A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Bombay, 1976, pp. 62-63. The landlords and *sufaid-poshes* did not cultivate with their own hands. Generally they were neither so fragal nor prosperous as better of the peasant-proprietors. Only 10 per cent of them were careful men whose incomes were more than their expenditures. Majority of the old families sank into poverty from two causes, both due to foolish pride. The head of the house thought to maintain a reputation for hospitality. To maintain it he mortgaged and borrowed freely. His sons were brought up in idleness and married early. They disdained to work with their own hands : *Land Revenue Settlement Report of Bannu District 1872-78*, p. 59.

52. The land-owning class was dominated by the owner-cultivators. By 1881 the landowners who did not cultivate their lands themselves formed one per cent of the total landowners in the eastern plains, while in the western plains, their proportion was relatively larger : D.C.J. Ibbetson, *Report on the Census of the Punjab 1881*, Calcutta, 1883, p. 381; and H. Calvert, *The Size and Distribution of Agricultural Holdings in the Punjab*, Board of Economic Inquiry, Publication No. 4, 1925, pp. 4-6.

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beginning of the twentieth century. Because of the size of their holding being above the subsistence level their economic position was relatively sound and they could produce more for the market.<sup>53</sup> The peasant-proprietors belonging to this category were thus able to respond more effectively to the changing agrarian environment.

As compared to the tenant-cultivators, the holdings of the peasant-proprietors were generally larger.<sup>54</sup> The quality of the land tilled by the large peasant-proprietors too was generally better than that cultivated by the tenants and the resources at the disposal of the peasant-proprietors also were relatively larger and the wastage of human and cattle force in their case was minimum. The peasant-proprietors by and large kept better cattle and used them for cultivation purposes, while the tenants were keen to use their cattle power to supplement their income from cultivation. The peasant-proprietors levelled the ground, rooted out weed, followed careful rotation, allowed more fallows and were keen on putting more manure in the fields, while the tenants did very little in these respects.<sup>55</sup> Judged by the standard of cultivation there were very few good non-cultivating proprietors in the Punjab, and with few exceptions, they were considered even a greater burden upon society than the money-lender.<sup>56</sup>

Also, the peasant-proprietors relatively showed greater aptitude for the application of the latest scientific and technological innovations as soon as their practical utility became clear to them.<sup>57</sup> Wider popularity of the iron sugar mill in a very short time in the Punjab illustrates this.<sup>58</sup> Introduced in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it ousted the old wooden press almost every where by the turn of the century.<sup>59</sup> Sugarcane being a perennial crop and involving

53. H. Calvert, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-4.

54. In Jehlam district, for example, by 1872-73 the average size of peasant-proprietor's holding was 10 acres and that of tenants's about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres : *PAR 1872-73*, pp. 15-16.

55. H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, pp. 90-93.

56. M.L. Darling, *Rusticus Loguitur or the Old Light and the New in the Punjab Villages*, Oxford University Press, 1930, pp. 332-33.

57. See for example, *Multan District Gazetteer 1923-24*, pp. 174-75.

58. Major sugarcane producing districts in the Punjab were Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Sialkot, Jalandhar, Rohtak and Karnal : A. Latifi, *Industrial Punjab : A Survey of Facts, Conditions and Possibilities*, Bombay, 1911, pp. 194-95.

59. *Imperial Gazetteer of India : Provincial Series : Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 59. See also, *Karnal District Gazetteer 1883-84*, p. 163.

considerable expenditure, the iron sugar mill was little attractive to the tenants-at-will who rarely purchased it. Likewise, the masonry wells equipped with the iron Persian wheel were mainly constructed by the peasant-proprietors because they had a better right in land and greater economic means.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, due to poverty and limited rights, the tenants preferred to leave their wells unbricked and to work with the old apparatus.<sup>61</sup> In their response to specific scientific innovations, the peasant-proprietors took to the use of better seeds and inorganic manure. They also began the cultivation of more remunerative crops on a large scale, while the tenants generally preferred to cultivate crops involving minimum of expenditure and thus continued largely in subsistence farming.<sup>62</sup>

The unexpected success of the canal colonies too was at least partly due to the colonising characteristics of the peasant-proprietors. Colonisation in our period was a lengthy process in which the success of one project led to the commission of the next. The government had introduced capitalists and yeomen in canal colonies expecting them to provide lead in the application of advancements in agriculture. In due course, however, the government realised their unsatisfactory colonising habits as they were very largely the absentee landlords and the standard of cultivation on their land was very low.<sup>63</sup> On the Rakh Branch, the first circle in Lyallpur colony, the peasants, yeomen, capitalists and auction purchasers were all represented in due proportions. But on other branches, colonised after the Rakh Branch, the settlers were mostly peasant-proprietors, for the government by then

60. Sukhwant Singh, "The Peasant-Proprietors in the Punjab, 1849-1901," *Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference*, Fourteenth Session, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1981, pp. 192-96. See also, *PAR 1897-98*, p. 464; *Imperial Gazetteer of India : Provincial Series : Punjab*, pp. 59 and 154; J.M. Douie, *Punjab Land Administration Manual*, Lahore, 1931 (revised edition), p. 229, and H. Calvert, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-93 and 206.

61. See, for example, *Karnal District Gazetteer 1918*, pp. 107-09.

62. H. Calvert, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90. The high yielding varieties of crops were widely cultivated in the canal colonies where the peasant-proprietors of reputed agricultural tribes were settled as colonists. In Montgomery district, for example, in 1932-33, of the total area under cotton and wheat, 95 per cent and 83 per cent respectively were under high yielding varieties : *Montgomery District Gazetteer 1933*, p. 162.

63. M.L. Darling, *op. cit.*, pp. 118, 121 and 132; Himadri Banerjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30; and Deva Singh, *Colonization in the Rechna Doab*, pp. 14-15.

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had recognised the fine colonising characteristics of the peasant-proprietors.<sup>64</sup> As a result, in the Lyallpur and Shahpur colonies, the peasant settlers held 80 per cent of the total colonised area, and also responded enthusiastically to the cultivation of more profitable crops.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, in a short time, most of the peasant settlers in the canal colonies were able to redeem their fields mortgaged in the home villages which were mostly in the central Punjab.<sup>66</sup>

Capital investment by private enterprise in making permanent improvements on land supplemented the efforts of the government. In this sphere also the peasant-proprietors overshadowed the other landed classes. It was often observed by the British administrators that since the annexation of the Punjab the peasant-proprietors vastly improved their holdings primarily at their own expense.<sup>67</sup> The wells which were the chief source of investment were mainly constructed by the peasant-proprietors.<sup>68</sup> With the result, the number of masonry wells increased about two fold between 1849 and 1901.<sup>69</sup> The loans for agricultural improvements also were given on the security of land owned.<sup>70</sup> The concessions and exemptions offered by the government to those constructing irrigation works and effecting other improvements on land also went largely to the peasant-proprietors.<sup>71</sup> In fact, the

64. Deva Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

65. M.L. Darling, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-17.

66. S.S. Thorburn, *Punjab in Peace and War*, Patiala, 1970 (reprint), pp. 282-83.

67. J.M. Douie, *Punjab Land Administration Manual*, p. 229.

68. The tenants even with occupancy rights had no right to construct a masonry well because it was considered a symbol of proprietary right : *PAR 1849-51*, pp. 103-04; and C.H. Spitta, *Manual of Law for the Punjab*, Lahore, 1879, pp. 142-46 and 170-72.

69. In 1849, the Punjab had 142,556 wells of all sorts. The number of masonry wells alone rose to 276,000 in 1903-04 and to 341,713 in 1945-46 : *PLRAR 1861-62*, 148 : *Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series : Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 68; and M.L. Darling, *op. cit.*, p. 143, n. 5.

70. *PAR 1849-51*, p. 132; and J.M. Douie, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

71. To encourage investment in the means of irrigation the government did not make additional assessment on newly constructed irrigation works until the private capital invested had a time to reap a remunerative return. In the Punjab the term of exemption from assessment on new improvements was uniformly fixed at 20 years for masonry wells. 5 years for canal distributaries and 10 years for other irrigation works : Government of India, *Proceedings of*

[Continued on page 96]

system of public investment and incentives given in agriculture was such in greater advantage to the peasant-proprietors was inbuilt.

In conclusion, the industriousness and enthusiasm of the peasant-proprietors played an important role in the increase of agricultural production in the Punjab. The peasant-proprietors showed more aptitude for the application of the latest scientific and technological innovations. Their aptitude for technological advancements initiated a process of modernisation in the agriculture of the Punjab.

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*Continued from page 95]*

*Department of Revenue and Agriculture : Revenue, August 1892, Nos. 17-19; Government of India, Land Revenue Policy of the Indian Government, Government Printing, Calcutta, 1902, pp. 24-25 and 85; and Imperial Gazetteer of India : Provincial Series : Punjab, Vol. I, pp. 112-13.*

## Dr Hari Ram Gupta—The Doyen of the Punjab Historians

DR SHIV KUMAR GUPTA\*

With the demise of Dr Hari Ram Gupta on 28th March 1992 at New Delhi, a trinity of distinguished Punjab historians has been eclipsed—Dr Ganda Singh and Dr Fauja Singh having already left the scene one after the other.

Born on 5 February 1902 at a small village Bhurewal, tehsil Naraingarh, district Ambala, Hari Ram Gupta had his higher education at Lahore. He was the first person to receive the degree of Ph.D. in 1937 and D. Litt. in 1944 in history from the Panjab University.

Dr Gupta started his career as a lecturer in History at Forman Christian College, Lahore. For some time he was also the Principal of Vaish College, Bhiwani. Later he served as Head of the Department of History at Aitchison College, Lahore. After partition he joined historical section in the Ministry of Defence and wrote 'Narratives of Persian and Iraq Force and Burma Campaigns of World War II.' He served as Professor and Head, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh from 1957 to 1963 and Dean University Instruction for over a year. After retirement, Dr Gupta worked for three years as an Honorary Professor in the Department of History, University of Delhi from 1964 to 1967, under the University Grants Commission scheme for retired teachers. This was followed by a period of continuous teaching at Dev Samaj College, Ferozepur, where he happened to be as an Honorary Head of the Department of History till his last days, living in a small room in students' Hostel, fully involved in teaching and research both.

Dr Gupta is the author of more than a dozen research volumes, mostly dealing with the history of the Sikhs, prepared from original sources available in Persian, Marathi, Gurmukhi, English, Urdu and Hindi. He enjoyed international reputation as an authority on the history of the Sikhs. No wonder, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, conferred upon him Sir Jadunath Sarkar Gold Medal for his 'out-

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standing' original contribution to the history of the Punjab.

An erudite scholar, Dr Gupta wrote with zest and vision. His style is lucid and terse and language plain but forceful. Forewords to his books written by such eminent persons as Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Sir Jogendra Singh, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and N.V. Gadgil speak volumes of his contribution in the field of historical research.

According to Collingwood 'the horizon of history had to be widened through a more sympathetic investigation of those past ages which the enlightenment had treated as unlightened, or barbaric and left in obscurity.' True to it, Dr Hari Ram Gupta took up, to study an obscure period—a period of almost complete darkness in the history of the Sikhs from the time of Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708 till Ranjit Singh's occupation of Lahore in 1799. Dr Gupta has thrown light on this period in four volumes, including the 'Studies in Later Mughal history of the Panjab,' after a continuous persistent and strenuous labour of ten years. In fact Dr Gupta was the first historian to have planned a seven volume survey with an aim to present a comprehensive view of the rise, growth and development of Sikh thought and action almost in every direction religious, philosophical, political, military, social, economic and cultural as also contribution of Sikhism to world civilization, in particular to human rights, principles of liberty, equality and fraternity and to the creed of democracy and secularism. Four of these seven volumes viz. The Sikh Gurus, Vol. I; Evolution of Sikh Confederacies, Vol. II; Sikh Dominion of the Mughal Empire, Vol. III; The Sikh Monarchy, 1729-1849, Vol. IV had already appeared. Other three—The Sikh Commonwealth or Rise and Fall of the Sikh Misl; The Social and Economic History of the Sikhs, 1469-1849 and the Sikhs under the British and in Free India, were still under preparation when the death snatched him from us.

In his 'foreword' to Dr Gupta's *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, dealing with Cis-Sutlej Sikhs, 1769-1799, Sir Jogendra Singh observed in 1943 :

Hari Ram Gupta has the gift of summoning processions of the pictures of the past and revivifying them with the breath of life. He has delved deep into the records of nearly two hundred years past and from the fragments of scattered documents build up a connected story, revealing the decay

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1. Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, Lahore, 1944, p. 10.

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of Moghul Empire and the adventurous rise of the power of the Sikhs.

Sir Jogindra Singh recommended that 'every Sikh should read his book and resolve at all costs to bring unity with the *Panth*, and with it power to mould its own future and that of India.'<sup>2</sup>

Dr Hari Ram Gupta epitomizes the various stages of the rise of Sikh power as "From ploughshare to sword, from sword to forts, from forts to fortress, from fortress to garrison, from garrison to armies, from armies to territories and from territories to kingdoms."<sup>3</sup> He would have us believe that it was the danger which led them from weakness to strength, from strength to greatness and from greatness to glory."<sup>4</sup>

In his *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. III, dealing with Trans-Sutlej Sikhs, 1769-1799, Dr Gupta observed, "Though a victim of civil strife, the Trans-Sutlej Sikhs displayed a noble trait, a character in resisting the invader from the north-west single handed, without receiving any assistance from their bretheren of the Cis-Sutlej."<sup>5</sup>

"News letters do what perhaps no other record of the period does; they transport us completely to a different level of perception and consciousness. Through them we attain a great understanding of the times of the spirit which is so essential for the study of history."<sup>6</sup> Dr Hari Ram Gupta's *Punjab on the Eve of First Sikh War* is a documentary study of the political, social and economic conditions of the Punjab as depicted in the daily letters written chiefly from Lahore by British intelligence during the period from 30 December 1843 to 31 December 1844. These documents unfold a story which culminated in intrigues between Sikh Government of Punjab and the British Government which virtually sealed the fate of the army and kingdom." "History is not only an intellectual discipline but it has moral lessons for all times and ages." "The present volume," according to Dr R.C. Majumdar, "has such lessons for us all in India, both the rulers and the ruled, and it is to be confidently hoped that they would make it a point to read and project by these documents so that warnings of history may not go in vain."<sup>7</sup>

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2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 1.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, *Punjab on the Eve of First Sikh War*, Chandigarh, 1975, p. 20.

7. *Ibid.*, Title page.



'Adina Beg'—the last Mughal Viceroy of the Punjab, was yet another obscure personality, Dr Gupta worked upon. Except a defective Persian manuscript of twelve small folios, hardly anything existed on this subject. Dr Gupta, with his usual zealous pursuit scratched and unearthed the archival material and was successful in placing before the students of history yet another work of immense historical importance.

Every newly discovered contemporary manuscript serves as a lamp either illuminating a dark and neglected corner or making the existing light brighter. 'Life and work of Mohan Lal Kashmiri, 1812-1877' is itself a great contribution of Dr Hari Ram Gupta. It is an autobiography of an adventurer which "gives us intimate and revealing glimpses of the early days of British rule in North India, of the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, of the British campaigns through Sind and in Afghanistan, of the disasters in Kabul and the prevailing conditions in Central Asia in the thirties of the 19th century. Hence of immense importance for a student of political as also socio-economic history of the period. In his 'foreword' to this work, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote, "Hari Ram Gupta has evidently taken great pains over this work and he has done something that was worth doing."<sup>8</sup>

Of all the battles fought in India none has aroused so much interest and emotion of scholars and the common people alone as the third Battle of Panipat. The battle was fought not only to preserve Indian authority in this region but also to make India safe from foreign invasions.

*Marathas and Panipat* by Dr Hari Ram Gupta is an attempt to give a fair and a dispassionate account of the third Battle of Panipat. The volume is divided into three parts. The first part gives the background of the battle in thirteen chapters. The narrative is based mainly on contemporary Persian, Marathi and Hindi sources as well as on the works of Sir Jadunath Sarkar and Dr G.S. Sardesai. Importance of the volume lies in the fact that whereas the author concentrates on the Marathas, he has tried to tell their history as part of the wider history of India and with relevant references to central Asian history, owing to the influence exerted by it on the history of this country. The rise and development of numerous powers closely connected with the history of the Marathas such as Ahmad Shah Durrani, Najib-ud-Daulah, Rohillas, the Nawabs of Avadh, the Jats, some of the Rajput

8. *Ibid.*, *Life and Works of Mohan Lal Kashmiri*, Lahore, 1943, Foreward.

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princes and to a certain extent of the Sikhs is sketched in its proper setting.

The Panipat campaign covering six chapters forms the second part. The third part or 'The Sequel' contains eight chapters. Causes of the Maratha defeat and consequences of the battle are described in two Chapters. A chapter on 'Maratha settlers in Panjab' embodies the result of visits to a number of places and interviews with nearly a hundred persons. The services rendered by Raja Ala Singh of Patiala to the Marathas at Panipat at the time of their dire need are discussed in a chapter on 'Marathas and the Sikhs.' Writing about this volume N.V.Gadgil has said :

The volume is an honest attempt to deal with the third Battle of Panipat from its causes to consequences and should stimulate interest in further study of the subject, on which surely the last word has not been written.<sup>9</sup>

Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who was Hari Ram Gupta's examiner for his Ph. D. thesis comments :

"Professor Hari Ram Gupta's thesis on the 'Evolution of the Sikh Confederacies,' which I examined, along with Sir Edward Maclagan, the scholarly ex-governor of the Panjab, for the Ph.D. degree of the Panjab University, struck me as a work of outstanding merit which completely fills up a gap in our knowledge of modern Indian history.... One period of Panjab history and that of Delhi Empire, too, ... has thus been set up on a granite foundation. It ought to serve as a model to other works on Indian history."<sup>10</sup>

There is no denying the fact that this period (1716-1799) forms one of the most important chapters of Sikh history. It was during this time that the Sikhs evolved themselves by the strength of their own arms, into one of the finest military peoples of the world. It was in these days that the Sikhs rendered the most invaluable services to the cause of our country by putting a dead stop to all foreign invasions from the North-West.<sup>11</sup>

Prof. Gupta's another volume in the series is *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. IV dealing with *The Sikh Commonwealth or Rise and Fall of Sikh Misls*. Writing about the Sikh struggle during this period Prof. Gupta writes :

9. Hari Ram Gupta, *Marathas and Panipat*, Chandigarh, 1961, p. 10.

10. *Ibid.*, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II; *Evolution of the Sikh Confederacies*, (1708-1769), Delhi, 1978, pp. 11-12.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Of all the Indian people who rose on the ruins of the Mughal Empire, none were more distinguished and outstanding than the Sikhs. Their struggle against the enemies of their faith and homeland was marked by their overwhelming fighting capacity, astonishing energy, stubborn perseverance, unprecedented sacrifices, unshakable faith in their destiny, predicted by Guru Gobind Singh, and the brilliancy of their success.<sup>12</sup>

A nonegenarian, Dr Gupta had seen history in making. He could not resist his anxiety to pen down his impressions of the contemporary events. It is well borne out by his three volumes study of Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. His other two volumes viz., 'Life and Letters of Sir Jadunath Sarkar' and 'Essays presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar' are not only examples of his deep regard for historical scholarship but also reflect his qualities of keen observation, deep penetration and acute selection. History of Dev Samaj Movement and Maharaja Ranjit Singh were his other two volumes ready for the press.

Geography is one of the major factors that determine the historical evolution of a people. It was keeping in view the importance of geography in history that a 'Students Historical Atlas of India,' though not a piece of historical research, was prepared by Dr Hari Ram Gupta conjointly with his teacher Shri Sita Ram Kohli way back in 1933, when hardly any such edition was available which could assist a young scholar in understanding the course of Indian history. Understanding well the importance of geography in history the two authors had taken special care in preparation of the maps to supply physical background necessary to explain the course of political or military events. Particularly the maps designed to illustrate the invasions from the north-west, the trade routes with Central Asia, the Anglo-Afghan wars, clearly indicate the influence of the topography of north-western India on the course of political, military and economic history of India.

A meeting with the doyen of Indian historians is always a matter of pride and privilege. Dr Gupta was privileged enough to have met and worked with Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Being exceedingly sympathetic to a deserving cause and impressed by Dr Gupta's work Sarkar recommended that his thesis should either be published by the University or it should give a suitable subsidy for its publication. When the University expressed its inability to do so, Sir Jadunath

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

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Sarkar got it printed and sent 500 copies to Dr Hari Ram Gupta at Lahore without charging him anything.

Dr Hari Ram Gupta devoted his entire life to the cause of historical research and teaching. If in his pursuit of research he produced volumes of immense historical research, in teaching his students enamoured around him to listen to his lectures. "During his lectures audience of hundreds was found glued to listen him for hours together. Even after decades, people remember and recall his feats of memory counting dates, events and names of people and places as also references with page numbers of the books he referred. But perhaps few know Dr Gupta had no good opinion about the life of a researcher as also a teacher. He felt that the "life of a researcher in India was miserable. Not to speak of any encouragement, the teaching profession did not even provide him with decent means of livelihood."<sup>13</sup> Recalling his experience Dr Gupta expressed, "After twelve years hardest toil, he found himself unable to make both ends meet."<sup>14</sup> Hence at one stage, way back in 1944, he felt compelled to call a halt to research activities and redirect his energies with some other channel." But that could not be. Perhaps his love for research and teaching could not lead him elsewhere and he remained glued to both till his last.

Dr Gupta considered it a question of vital importance to make the teaching of history in colleges and universities interesting and popular. According to him "Lectures should be accompanied by black-board writing, diagrams and sketch maps and the students should be kept alert throughout the period by asking questions frequently." Dr Gupta felt that the 'development of historical' thinking among students is of greater importance than historical learning.<sup>15</sup>

It was keeping in view his unsurpassed contribution to the fields of historical research that in 1981, the Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha honoured Dr Hari Ram Gupta at Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of Baisakhi. Bai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi presented Dr Gupta "The Bhai Vir Singh International Award" in 1989. The Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, at its 23rd session held in 1989, felt privileged to honour Dr Hari

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13. *Ibid.*, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. III, Lahore, 1944, Preface.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, 9th Session, 'Presidential Address,' April, Patiala, 1976, p. 13.

Ram Gupta in a befitting manner. The citation read at the occasion says :

Each monograph of his bears testimony to his indefatigable zeal, painstaking research penetrating intellect and proficiency in classical languages, especially Persian. With this intellectual equipment Professor Gupta has broken fresh ground in hitherto unknown areas leaving an indelible imprint wherever he dared to venture.<sup>16</sup>

Given to few, Professor Hari Ram Gupta had emerged a legend in his life-time.

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16. *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, 23rd session, 1989, Patiala, 1989.

## Rural Sanitation in British Punjab : A Critical Study

NARJEET KAUR\*

Sanitation is that branch of public health which is concerned with keeping the external environment healthful. The word 'sanitation' is derived from the Latin word '*sanitas*' which means a state of health.

The question of urban sanitation in the case of a majority of towns constituted an important problem from the standpoint of public health. But, outside the municipal limits there were no special arrangements for sanitation. In the Punjab for the first time in 1926, Rural Sanitary Board was created as a result of the division of the Drainage Board during that year. The urban sanitary Board was placed under the control of Director of Public Health, whereas the Rural Sanitary Board was placed under the control of Director of Public Health, whereas the Rural Sanitary Board, which dealt with areas outside the irrigation limits, was to remain under the control of Chief Engineer, Buildings and Roads Branch.<sup>1</sup> In 1932, the Government abolished the Rural Sanitary Board and Irrigation Branch was vested with the responsibility for all drainage and embankment works, exclusive of the sanitary works.<sup>2</sup> Hereafter, Urban Sanitary Board began to be known as the Sanitary Board.<sup>3</sup>

Village sanitation in whole of the Province was in the appallingly backward condition.<sup>4</sup> The Punjab Administration Report of 1907-08

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1. Punjab Legislative Council Debates (hereafter abbreviated as PLCD), 7 March, 1927, Vol. X, No. 4, Lahore, 1927, pp. 129-30.
2. *A Manual of Administration* (Punjab Government Publication PWD, Irrigation Branch, Chandigarh, 1954), Chapter I, para 163.
3. *Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner for 1932*, Vol. I (Government Publication, Delhi, 1934), p. 209.
4. See *Punjab District Gazetteers, Gazetteer of Jhang District 1908*, Lahore, 1910, p. 161; *Gazetteer of Karnal District 1918*, Lahore, 1919, p. 207; *Gazetteer of Sialkot District 1920*, Lahore, 1921, p. 204; *Gazetteer of Gujrat District 1921*, Lahore, 1921, p. 158; *Gazetteer of Montgomery District 1933*, (Lahore, 1935).

[Continued on page 106]

shows that in the villages there had been practically no improvement. No direct sanitary improvements had been made though the necessity of them had been proved year by year in the plague epidemics.<sup>5</sup> Similar remarks were made by Hans Raj, a member Punjab Legislative Council, in the 1925 session of the Council.<sup>6</sup> The District Medical Officer of Health of Montgomery District noted that the sanitary condition of the villages in the district was very unsatisfactory. No conservancy staff existed to clean up the villages. Filth was heaped up inside or quite close to the human habitations for a long time until it was removed to the fields as manure. There were no drains worth the name in the rural areas and wherever they existed there was nobody to flush them. Drinking water supply was most unsatisfactory and unhygienic, water was mostly drawn from shallow wells which were unprotected from filth and flood water.<sup>7</sup> Similar was the state of affairs in many other districts.

The progress regarding sanitation in rural areas was impeded by certain factors. The chief of these was the ignorance and backwardness of the people. Deep rooted habits, customs, beliefs and prejudices on the part of rural population were responsible to a great extent for their negligence regarding personal hygiene and sanitation.<sup>8</sup> Lack of general awareness and education and health education added materially to the difficult of overcoming the indifference with which the people tolerated the insanitary conditions around them and the large amount of sickness that prevailed.

Another cause which affected the rural sanitary progress was the inadequacy of local revenues and the insufficiency of the staff.<sup>9</sup> Ever since the creation of Rural Sanitary Board, it had never been free from the anxiety about finances. Many useful schemes had been postponed for lack of funds.<sup>10</sup> The village *lambardar* was the only government official in the village who collected revenues from the

*Continued from page 105]*

- p. 310; *PLCD*, 22 October, 1926, Vol. IX-No. 31, Lahore, 1926, p. 1712, Ramsaran Das, 'Note on Rural Sanitation' in *Report of the Punjab Sanitary Conference*, August 1913, Part II, Correspondence and Papers, Lahore, 1913, p. 97; Mehdi Khan, 'Note on Rural Sanitation' in *Ibid.*, p. 95.
5. *Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependences for the year 1907-8*, Lahore, 1909, p. vii. Hereafter abbreviated as PAR.
6. *PLCD*, 1 March, 1928, Vol. X-No. 6, Lahore, 1928, p. 257.
7. *Gazetteer of Montgomery District 1933*, Lahore, 1935, p. 310.
8. *Gazetteer of Ludhiana District 1904*, Lahore, 1907, p. 226.
9. See *PLCD*, 6 May, 1925, Vol. VIII, No. 21, Lahore, 1925, p. 1048.
10. *PLCD*, 22 October, 1926, Vol. IX, No. 31, Lahore, 1926, p. 1711.

## RURAL SANITATION IN BRITISH PUNJAB : A CRITICAL STUDY

villagers but he himself had no funds to spend on the setting up, maintenance and continuance of sanitary services in the village. Actually sanitation in villages was never considered a matter which should attract attention of the Government and its officials. Major portion of the funds went to the urban areas.<sup>11</sup> During the year 1914 the Government granted rupees 7.5 lakhs for sanitation, out of which rupees 5 lakhs were reserved for distribution to urban areas and only rupees 2.5 lakhs for the improvement of rural sanitation.<sup>12</sup>

In villages sanitation was much neglected also owing to the fact that there was no direct link between the village and rural sanitary authority and that the latter had little of any responsibility as regards taking action; in consequence little or nothing was done.<sup>13</sup>

In view of the fact that 90% of the population of the Punjab lived in villages<sup>14</sup> and of the importance of the rural population in the economic life of the Province, their well being was a matter of special importance. But the question of rural sanitation was given hardly any importance by the alien rulers. Though some attention was paid during the closing decades of the British rule in the Punjab towards improving rural sanitation practically nothing significant was done.<sup>15</sup> The Director of Public Health pointed out in his annual report for 1936 that, of a total of 35,871 villages in the Province, only 382 villages distributed over 27 districts (or about 1%) satisfied these conditions and could be considered as 'sanitated.' As a result of the continued drive to improve village sanitation the number of 'sanitated' villages rose to 5,470 by 1943 or 15.2% of the total villages.<sup>16</sup> The criteria laid down can be considered as only minimum

11. *PLCD*, 20 March, 1924, Vol. VI, No. 17, Lahore, 1924, p. 758; *PLCD*, 22 October 1926, Vol. IX, No. 31, Lahore, 1926, p. 1712.

12. Home, Sanitary Proceedings, May 1925, Nos. 1-8, p. 3.

13. S. Browning Smith, 'Proposals for the Improvement of Rural Sanitation' in *Report of the Punjab Sanitary Conference*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

14. *Census of India*, Vol. XV, Punjab and Delhi, 1921, Part-I, Lahore, 1923, p. 107; also see, D.W. Aikman 'Note on Rural Sanitation' in *Report of the Punjab Sanitary Conference*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

15. Virinder Singh, *Dyarchy in Punjab*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 65.

16. *Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1946, pp. 11-12. The Director of Public Health took the following as criteria for what he termed a 'sanitated village':

- 1) a water supply protected from surface contamination;
- 2) drains for the removal of waste water;
- 3) regular removal of filth and refuse outside the village to a place prepared for their reception.



standards of environmental sanitation and although some progress had been achieved in the Punjab, much more remained to be done. It is unfortunately true that the Punjab was in an unfavourable position in relation to the provincial mortalities of India in as much as it was generally at the top of the list.<sup>17</sup> Majority of the population being rural, the greater proportion of the distressing mortality was contributed by the rural population and this mortality, according to W.H.C. Forster (Director Public Health, Punjab) was very largely due to the conditions under which the people lived.<sup>18</sup> There had been a strong and persistent demand, which found frequent expression in the Lsgislative Council for preventive and curative measures to reduce the incidence of mortality from epidemics and to improve the sanitary conditions of villages.<sup>19</sup>

But the medical functions of the British Government were confined only to fighting disease, caring for the sick, the collection of statistical data and relevant research work rather than taking preventive measures which would have been more meaningful and fruitful. More important was the raising of the general standard of public health by means of efficient sanitation including personal hygiene. Mass awareness regarding sanitation could make a lasting effect on environmental cleanliness and ensure minimisation of disease like cholera, small-pox, malaria, etc., which assume the form of epidemics in insanitary conditions. But neither the Government involved any voluntary agency for spreading awareness about sanitation among the masses nor did any voluntary agency attach any importance to this work. The effectiveness and efficacy of sanitary measures depended upon the amount of interest taken by various functionaries at different levels. There was no personal involvement which could ensure a mass based movement of the people in general to maintain sufficiently desirable standards of sanitation in and around their living places. As a result, not much was achieved through Governmental efforts regarding rural sanitation during the British period.

17. *PLCD*, 7 March, 1927, Vol. X, No. 4, Lahore, 1927, p. 119.

18. *PLCD*, 22 October, 1926, Vol. IX, No. 31, Lahore, 1926, p. 1713.

19. S. Browing Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

## The Jagirdars and Mufidars in the Upper Bari Doab (1849-1947)

DR B.S. HIRA\*

In important reason for the replacement of the Board of Administration by the Chief Commissioner in 1853 is supposed to be the conflicting convictions of the Lawrence brothers, Henry and John, about the treatment of the erstwhile beneficiaries of the kingdom of Lahore. "There were some 20,000 cases for disposal, and the claimants ranged from the *jagirdars* or fief-holders of many villages to petty endowed institutions such as almshouses and religious infant-schools in villages. To the former the land revenue of thousands, sometimes tens of thousands, of acres had been alienated; to the latter only an acre or two in each case."<sup>1</sup> John regarded most of the large grantees as ex-rebels or drones and, therefore, undeserving of any consideration from the new rulers; Henry regarded them as worthy patriots fallen on evil days and, therefore, morally as well politically entitled to liberal treatment.

This view of the situation is amplified by N.M. Khilnani rather recently. Whereas Henry viewed the problem of former beneficiaries of the state from the point of political expediency, John regarded the chiefs and *jagirdars* as parasitic. The former wished to retain for the former *jagirdars* the greater part of their *jagirs* without the obligation of service; the latter looked upon such a policy as wasteful and retrogressive. John's insistence on the financial aspect of the question and his refusal to recognise the expediency of maintaining the remnants of the old Sikh aristocracy, spelt the ruin of the class Henry wished to preserve."<sup>2</sup> John's views prevailed, as he was backed by Lord Dalhousie. In the beginning of 1853, Henry left for Rajputana and John became the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab to pursue his policies unhindered.

More recently, Dolores Domin has argued that measures against the feudal forces of the Punjab were in keeping with the general policy

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1. S.S. Thornburn, *The Punjab in Peace and War*, Patiala, 1970 (reprint), p. 179.

2. N.M. Khilnani, *British Power in the Punjab 1839-1858*, Bombay, 1972, pp. 188; 185-93.

of the British in India and did not result from either the personal notions of John Lawrence or the ambitions of Lord Dalhousie. The *jagir* policy of Lord Dalhousie was in fact less rigid and uncompromising than Hardinge's. The objective of undermining the general position of the ruling class in the social order was kept in view, but the decisions taken were rather pragmatic. 'No rent-free tenure should be continued in favour of any man who has taken up arms against the British Government, whether by choice or compulsion,' and a maximum amount of 300 rupees per month could be given to a 'rebel' as pension. Within six months of the annexation, *jagirs* worth about 1,257,500 rupees were confiscated, and pensions worth only about 58,300 were given to the disposed persons. But there were many *jagirdars* who had remained neutral in the war or actually supported the British. In their case, generally, personal *jagir* was given for life but service *jagir* was resumed. In many cases, *jagir* was replaced by a cash pension. The powers of the *jagirdar* over the proprietors of land were neutralized through several measures: assessment in cash was introduced in the *jagir* lands as well as the *khalisa*; the cultivator was made responsible for paying the land revenue; the *jagirdars* were deprived of their police powers; and they were made equal before the law. The social status of the *jagirdars* suffered not only because of the reduction in *jagirs* but also because the changed character of the *jagir*. Thus, the change introduced by the new rulers was important not only quantitatively but also qualitatively.<sup>3</sup>

If these progressive measures were taken to encourage economic progress they were gradually retracted after the uprising of 1857-58 in political interest. The expected lapses were counterbalanced by new grants, so that the total amount of assigned revenues in 1859-60 was larger than in the early 1850s. Out of 3,300,000 rupees assigned to all and sundry, 1,400,000 rupees or about 42 per cent were assigned in perpetuity.<sup>4</sup> The process may be illustrated with reference to the case to an important *jagirdar*, Sardar Shamsher Singh Sandhanwalia. After the annexation of his personal *jagirs* amounting to 40,250 rupees were upheld for life, and a quarter was to descend to his male issue in perpetuity. His service *jagir* of 30,250 rupees was resumed. In 1857, Shamsher Singh raised a troop of 125 horsemen, which formed a part of Hodson's Horse, to serve the British during the uprising. Early in

3. Dolores Domin, *India in 1857-59: A Study in the Role of the Sikhs in the Peoples Uprising*, Berlin, 1977, pp. 71-85. Cf. James Douie, *Punjab Land Administration*, Chandigarh, 1972 (reprint), pp. 45-50.
4. Dolores Domin, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

## THE JAGIRDARS AND MUAFIDARS IN THE UPPER BARI DOAB, 1849-1947

1862, the portion of his *jagir* to descend in perpetuity was raised from one-fourth to two-thirds, and he was given full revenue, civil and criminal powers of a Deputy Commissioner in his *jagir*.

Trevaskis refers to the feeling of the British administrators after the uprising of 1857-58 that 'the landed aristocracy should be maintained,' and goes on to add that in fact the splitting up of estates through inheritance became a source of fear. 'Orders were accordingly issued that in the case of all new assignments granted by Government, the rule of primogeniture should be followed and proposals were also made for its application to the older estates.'<sup>6</sup> The Punjab Descent of Jagirs Act, IV of 1900, was meant to amend, section 8 of the Punjab Laws Act of 1872 in respect of the descent of *jagirs*. Its purpose was to encourage 'devolution of the assignment of land-revenue to a single person as impartible property.'<sup>7</sup> By the late 1930s, 153 *jagirs* were 'not fied' under this Act.<sup>8</sup> To keep the *jagirs* under good management was as important as to keep them in one piece. The Punjab Court of Wards Act was passed in 1903 to amend the law relating to the court of wards in the province. The Financial Commissioner was henceforth to be the Court of Wards either directly or through the Commissioner of the Division or the Deputy Commissioner of the District by delegating any of its powers to them. Any landholder could apply to the government for his property to be placed under the superintendence of the Court of Wards. The government itself could take initiative in this regard in the case of persons incapable of managing or unfit to manage their affairs, as by the reason of being a female, owing to any physical or mental defect or infirmity, owing to his having been convicted of a non-bailable offence and to his vicious habits or bad character, or owing to his having entered upon a course of wasteful extravagance likely to dissipate his property.<sup>9</sup> The operation of this Act was carefully watched and reported every year. In 1928-29, for example, four

5. G.L. Chopra (ed.), *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1940, p. 409.
6. Hugh Kennedy Trevaskis, *The Land of the Five Rivers*, Oxford University Press, 1928, p. 258.
7. *Punjab Land Administration Acts and Rules Having the Force of Law Thereunder*, Lahore, 1933, I, "The Punjab Descent of Jagirs Act 1900," pp. 3-5.
8. *Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Punjab for the year ending the 30th September, 1939*, Lahore, p. 1940, 13; *Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Punjab for 1939-40*, Lahore, 1941, p. 15.
9. *Punjab Land Revenue Administration Acts*, I, "The Punjab Court of Wards Act, 1903," pp. 5-6.

estates were taken over and six released to reduce the total number of estates under the Court of Wards from 50 to 48. However, the cultivated area under the Court of Wards increased from 166,666 to nearly 200,000 acres, with an increase in the amount of land revenue involved from 220,000 to 240,000 rupees. With the exception of the large estate of Mamdot, there was little tendency to adopt improved methods of agriculture; it was suggested, therefore, that scientific agriculture should be introduced in the estates under the Court of Wards to increase production and to set an example for other cultivators.<sup>10</sup> Three years later, the number of estates under the Court of Wards was 61 and their income amounted to 1,730,000 rupees. But the attempt to extend official assistance to heavily encumbered estates on the application of the owners had involved the Court of Wards in 'problems of difficulty and complexity.'<sup>11</sup>

At the beginning of British rule in the Punjab, it appeared that in no region in the east did feudalism prevail more than in the kingdom founded by Ranjit Singh. 'A large section of the Maharajah's army consisted of cavalry contingents, furnished by chieftains holding grants on feudal tenure. And even a part of the regular troops received their pay in *jagirs* instead of cash. In the same manner, that is by assignments on the revenue, the civil officers of state and the royal household for the most part were paid; state pensioners, the families of military chiefs, and old soldiers, and the ladies of the royal palace were supported; endowments for objects of sanctity, charitable donations, and annuities to religious characters were granted for the same objects, pensions were conferred.'<sup>12</sup> All the grants in cash and kind were classified by the Board of Administration into three categories: service grants, personal grants and religious grants. Enquiries were made, principles of reduction were formulated, and procedures were evolved to deal with all kinds of grants. The liabilities which the new rulers had inherited from the old could not be set aside altogether because of 'political expediency.' 'On the whole, the temporary alienation of revenue under the two heads of *jagirs* and pensions will amount to upwards of thirty lacs per annum,' said the report, 'that is, to more than a fifth of the total revenue.'<sup>13</sup>

10. *Punjab Administration Report, 1929-30*, Lahore, 1931, pp. 23-24.

11. *Punjab Administration Report, 1932-33*, Lahore, 1935, p. 20.

12. *General Report upon the Administration of the Punjab Proper for the years 1849-50 and 1850-51*, Calcutta, 1853, pp. 119-20.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

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By 1939-40, when the total revenue from land in the Punjab was over 50 millions of rupees, the percentage of assigned revenue was less than 8%. But this reduction in percentage was largely due to the increase in the revenue from land, which was more than three fold. Only one-fifteenth of the cultivated land was under assignments. It is significant, however, that the bulk of the revenue assigned was held in perpetuity, 3,032,201 rupees out of the total of 3,608,050 rupees. Nearly 200,000 rupees stood assigned for life and over 500,000 rupees for the term of the settlement. The total revenue assigned covered several purposes: maintenance of public servants for services to be performed, maintenance of religious institutions, public purposes which were rather secular in character, and for the private benefit of individuals without any obligation to service. The most important of all these were the assignments for 'private benefit without any obligation of service,' claiming more than half of the total assigned revenue.<sup>14</sup> The beneficiaries of these assignments were mostly the descendants of the *jagirdars* of the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. The reduction of their share in the land-revenue from over 23 per cent of the total to less than one-twentieth of the total was an index of the relative decline in their politico-administrative and social importance after nearly a century of colonial rule in the Punjab. In terms of numbers they formed the smallest but the most important section of the Punjab population even in the 1940s.

### II

The Upper Bari Doab was a stronghold of the *jagirdars* and we may expect them *a priori* to figure in the settlement reports and gazetteers of the districts of Gurdaspur and Amritsar. In the *pargana* of Adinanagar (later, tahsil Gurdaspur) in 1850 there were 598 *mahals* in all worth over 267,000 rupees of revenue. Of these, 369 were in the *khalisa*, and 190 in *jagirs*, while the remaining 39 were shared between the *khalisa* and the *jagir*. In the year following, 10 *jagir mahals* were resumed and 9 more became 'shared.' After the settlement, there were 153 *jagir mahals* assessed at 60,931 rupees, the average rate per acre of cultivation working out to 1-11-3 rupees. Of these *jagir* villages, 94 were supposed to be miscellaneous, but the remaining 59 were clearly assigned to some important *jagirdars*, like Sardar Lehna Singh, Sodhis Partap Singh and Bishan Singh, the Mahant of Pindori, Sardar Didar Singh Veglia and Raja Tej Singh.<sup>15</sup> In tahsil Gurdaspur as the

14. *Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Punjab 1930-40*, Lahore, 1941, Statement X.

15. *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Greater Part of the District of Gurdaspur*, Lahore, 1859, pp. 22-23.

reconstituted *pargana* of Adinanagar a few years later, there were 259 *jagir mahals* out of the total of 706, while 46 others were 'shared.' The total amount of assigned revenue was about 156,000 rupees.<sup>16</sup>

In the *pargana* of Batala in 1850, there were 681 *mahals* in all, of which 332 were *jagir mahals* and 37 were 'shared.' After the settlement no less than 299 *mahals* remained under *jagirs*, with their revenues assessed at more than 188,000 rupees and amounting to a third of the total revenues. It is interesting to note that the average rate per cultivated acre was 2-0-2 rupees in the *jagir* lands as against 1-12-6 rupees per acre in the *malguzari* lands. Probably, the villages held by *jagirdars* were the more fertile villages. While 186 villages worth about 104,000 rupees a year were assigned to less known figures, 113 villages worth over 84,500 rupees were held by well known persons like Raja Dina Nath, Raja Tej Singh, Sardar Lehna Singh, Rai Kishan Chand Bhandari, Sardar Shamsher Singh, Darogha Amir Bakhsh, Sardars Jaimal Singh and Jawahar Singh, Mahant Bhagwan Das of Dera Tahli Sahib, and Baba Mihan Singh. Some resumptions and lapses took place a few years later.<sup>17</sup> At the time of the regular settlement, there were 162 *mahals* in *jagir* and 38 were 'shared,' with the total revenue in assignment amounting to about 120,000 rupees, which was only a little less than the third of the total revenues.<sup>18</sup> In tahsil Pathankot at the time of the regular settlement there were 181 *mahals* in all, of which 49 were in *jagir* and 26 were 'shared.' The assigned revenue of about 29,000 rupees formed a little less than a third of the total revenues of about 92,000 rupees.<sup>19</sup>

In the *pargana* of Sowrian (later tahsil Ajnala) of Amritsar District, there were 288 *mahals* in all, of which 88 were in *jagir* and 25 were shared in 1852. A year later four of the shared villages stood reverted to the *khalisa* so that the number of the *khalisa mahals* increased to 179. Out of the total revenues of over 227,500 rupees, the assigned revenues amounted to about 72,000 rupees or less than one-third of the total.<sup>20</sup> After the regular settlement the revenues of the *pargana* were assessed at about 287,500 rupees of which nearly 141,000 rupees went to assignments.<sup>21</sup> In the Sailaba Circle of the *pargana*, which had 23 *jagir mahals*, many of the villages were held in

16. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

20. *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Amritsar District*, Lahore, 1860, p. 27.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

*jagir* by Sardar Shamsheer Singh Sandhanwalia. In Betwala Circle, which contained 27 *jagir mahals*, the principal *jagirdars* were Shamsheer Singh Sandhanwalia and Kahan Singh Attariwala. In Utarwala Circle, which had 21 *jagir mahals*, the most important assignee was Sardar Lehna Singh.<sup>22</sup> In the rest of the circles the assignees were much less prominent.

In tahsil Amritsar in 1852, there were 472 *mahals* in all, of which 136 were in *jagir* and 30 were shared. A year later, with no change in the number of villages in each category, the total revenues amounted to over 507,500 rupees, of which nearly 141,000 rupees went to assignments, accounting for more than a quarter of the total revenues.<sup>23</sup> After the regular assessment, the total revenues amounted to a little over 365,000 rupees, and *jagirs* accounted for a little over 95,500 rupees or a little more than a quarter of the total. Resumptions worth over 28,000 had been made before the close of the settlement.<sup>24</sup> Most of the *jagir* villages in *tahsil* Amritsar were in the circles of Jandiala and Nehri. The principal *jagirdars* were the Majithia, Mananwala and Sandhanwalia Sardars.<sup>25</sup>

In the *pargana* of Tarn Taran in 1850, out of 348 *mahals* of the *pargana* 89 were in *jagir*. In 1852, the number of assigned acres in the *pargana* was 95,820 out of a total of 286,510 under cultivation. In the *pargana* as it was reconstituted after 1852, there were 103 *jagir mahals* out of 357 in all.<sup>26</sup> After the settlement, the assigned revenue amounted to about 73,500 rupees in the total revenue of about 205,700 rupees, accounting for more than one-third of the revenues of the *pargana*.<sup>27</sup> The principal *jagirdars* in the *pargana* were Sardar Gulab Singh Pahuwindia, Sardar Kirpal Singh Malwai, Raja Tej Singh, Sardar Hardit Singh Padhania, Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, Sardar Arjan Singh Chahal, Sardar Jaimal Singh Kamla, and the widow of Sardar Gulab Singh Manhalia. It is also interesting to note that some of the *dharmarth* grantees were included among the principal *jagirdars*, like the '*pujaris*' of Tarn Taran and the Akal Bunga, and Mai Prem Kaur of Goindwal.<sup>28</sup> This impression is confirmed when we look at the names of the assignees for different circles of the *pargana*. In Mahin Bangar Circle, there was Bhai Parduman Singh among the assignees;

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 32 and 34.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 132 and 17.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 22 and 23.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 54.



in the Upper Majha Circle, there were Kuldip Singh Pujari, Charhat Singh Nihang, Bhai Jassa Singh Granthi and Bhais Nidhan Singh, Hukam Singh and Kaur Singh, besides the Darbars of Tarn Taran and Khadur; in the Central Majha Circle, there were Baba Upar Singh, Sadh Mangal Singh and Baba Buta Singh, among others; in the Lower Majha Circle, there were Babas Daya Ram and Mayia Ram; in the Khara Majha Circle, there were Mahants Narmukh Das, Bala Nand and Kishan Dev; and in the Bet and Bangar Circle, there were Brahmans.<sup>29</sup> One important implication of including large *dharmarth* grantees in the *jagirdars* was to reduce the amount shown under *mu'afi*.

In the six *parganas* of the districts of Gurdaspur and Amritsar falling in the Upper Bari Doab in the late 1850s, the total number of *jagirdars* was 1772. They held 502 whole villages in *jagir* shared 205 villages with the *khalisa*, and had shares in the revenues of 93 other villages. They paid more than 74,000 rupees a year as *nazrana*, and received the net assigned revenue of about 426,500 rupees. Nearly 291,000 rupees of the assigned revenue were granted for life, about 27,000 rupees for two generations, and about 109,000 rupees in perpetuity. The land alienated in revenue consisted of wells and plots as well as whole villages and parts or shares of villages. The total number of *jagirdars* was larger in the district of Gurdaspur than in Amritsar, but the amount of assigned revenue was more in Amritsar than in Gurdaspur.<sup>30</sup> The majority of the principal *jagirdars* belonged to the district of Amritsar, now as in pre-colonial days. The *mu'afis* were in addition to these *jagirs*, and so were the pensions given to 'widows, orphans, mistresses, courtiers, servants of the former Government, and some Military or Civil servants or other parties who have deserved well of our own,' amounting to over 100,000 rupees. The *parganas* of Amritsar and Batala accounted for more than half of the this amount.<sup>31</sup>

### III

Comparable figures are not available for the rest of the 19th and the early 20th century, but there is enough information on *jagirs* and *jagirdars* in the settlement reports and gazetteers of the period. In *tahsil* Pathankot, for instance, there were 864 *jagirdars* in 1889-90, only 15 of whom held unconditional *jagirs* in perpetuity, while 326 held *jagirs* in perpetuity on conditions, 250 of the assignees were 'for

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 74, 83, 89, 94, 99 and 103.

30. R.N. Cust, *Statistical Report of the Amritsar Division*, Lahore, 1861, Appendix XIX.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 4 and Appendix XXI.

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life' and 8 for the term of the settlement, while 265 held *jagirs* during the pleasure of the government.<sup>32</sup> The area assigned in *jagir* was 8,303 acres, with the assessed revenue of 9,935 rupees. Certain changes had obviously taken place after the previous settlement. The large *jagir* of Sardar Lehna Singh stood resumed since the 1850s; the *jagir* of Sardar Jassa Singh of Naushahra Nangal stood resumed in part since the 1860s; the *jagirs* of a Kanhiya family stood resumed with the exception of 143 rupees in favour of the sons of Khushal Singh and Narain Singh. Some of the notable *jagirdars* in 1889-90 were Sardar Basawa Singh of Naushahra Nangal, Raja Indar Deo of Jammu and some representatives of the Pathania family of Shahpur. As it may be expected, some religious institutions and personages were also included in the assignees, like the Darbar Sahib and the Akal Bunga at Amritsar, the Thakurdwara at Dhamtal, Mahant Madho Nath of Jakhbar, the Vaishnave establishment at Talibpur Pindori, and the Bedis of Dera Baba Nanak. The *jagir* of Sardar Sahib Singh Veglia stood much reduced and divided among his descendants, amounting in all to 808 rupees a year in place of the original six villages.<sup>33</sup>

The number of *jagirdars* in tahsil Gurdaspur in 1889-90 was much larger than in Pathankot. Of the 1,915 assignees in all, 76 held assignments in perpetuity free of any conditions, but 371 of the *jagirdars* holding assignments in perpetuity were subject to certain conditions; 771 of the assignees were 'for life' and 695 during the pleasure of the government, while only two were for the term of the settlement. The total area assigned was about 18,600 acres, assessed at 35,127 rupees. Of this assessed amount 35,053 rupees formed the assigned revenue, indicating clearly that the entire area was assigned almost completely. The number of *jagirdars* who paid *nazrana* was 742.<sup>34</sup> In about four decades, the area assigned in *jagir* was reduced from over 77,000 acres to less than 19,000 and the amount of *jagir* was reduced from nearly 155,000 rupees to less than 35,500 rupees.<sup>35</sup> Obviously, lapses and resumptions took place on a large scale. Among those whose fortunes suffered during these decades were Raja Tej Singh, Raja Dina Nath, Rai Kishan Chand, Sardar Jaimal Singh Randhawa of Khunda, Sardar Gulab Singh Bhagowalia, and Sodhis Bishan Singh and Partap Singh.<sup>36</sup>

32. *Assessment Report of the Pathankot Tahsil*, Lahore, 1891, Statement III.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

34. *Assessment Report of the Gurdaspur Tahsil*, Lahore, 1891, Statement III and 13.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

The number of assignees in tahsil Batala in 1888-89 was 596, and the area assigned 'in whole or in part' was 4,815 acres. Of the assessed revenue of 6,885 rupees, the amount given in assignments was 6,491 rupees, and 396 of the *jagirdars* paid *nazrana*.<sup>37</sup> This tahsil witnessed probably the largest reduction in the assigned revenue over the past four decades. In the beginning it was much encumbered with grants because 'the principal Sikh Sardars naturally were anxious to have their *jagir* fields assigned to them in so favoured a tract, which was also close to their homes.' The process by which the reduction in the amount of assigned revenues took place comes out clearly in the settlement report of 1889. On the death of Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia in 1854, all his *jagirs* in the tahsil were resumed with the exception of over 3,000 rupees which were continued in favour of his son Sardar Dial Singh Majithia. On the death of Raja Dina Nath in 1857, his son Diwan Amar Nath succeeded in getting a cash grant of 4,000 rupees but all the *jagirs* of his father in tahsil Batala were resumed. The *jagir* of Raja Tej Singh was resumed upon his death and the *jagir* of his cousin, Raja Harbans Singh, son of Jamadar Khushal Singh, was resumed in 1883 when his widow was given a cash pension. The *jagir* of Sardar Shamsheer Singh Sandhanwalia, amounting to only 4,894 rupees in the tahsil, was resumed on his death. By the time of the settlement of 1865, the assigned revenue had been reduced from about 119,000 to about 103,000 rupees, but by the time of the settlement of 1889-90, it was reduced to less than 27,000 rupees. The principal grants now covered only 33 villages. The principal assignees were Raja Sir Sahib Dial, Sardar Mangal Singh Ramgarhia, Bhai Parduman Singh as Superintendent of the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar, Sardar Lal Singh of Talwandi, Sardar Bhup Singh Bagga and his brother, Sardar Gulab Singh Bhagowalia, Sardar Dial Singh Majithia, Sardar Harcharan Das and Mahant Ragho Das of Dhianpur. Among the 'miscellaneous' assignees were Bedis, Bhallas and Sayyids.<sup>38</sup>

For Gurdaspur District as a whole, the figures of assigned revenue are quite telling. At the time of the first regular settlement in the 1850s, the assigned revenue amounted to over 366,000 rupees. At the time of the settlement of 1865, this amount stood reduced to about 212,000 rupees. In 1890-91, the assigned revenue was only about 92,000 rupees. The important *jagirdars* of the district in 1890-91 were Thakur Harkishan Singh of Kishankot who was a grandson of Raja Sahib Dial, Sardar Rachhpal Singh of Bhagowal, Sardar Dial Singh

37. *Assessment Report of the Batala Tahsil*, Lahore, 1889, Statement No. 5.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

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Majithia, the Bagga Sardars Ishar Singh and Jiwan Singh, Sardar Basawa Singh of Naushahra Nangal and Amar Singh of the same family, Sardar Tara Singh Randhawa of Khunda, Raja Indar Deo of Akhrota, and Sardar Harnam Singh Veglia and others of the same family. They held *jagirs* worth over 25,000 rupees a year. It is interesting to note that *dharmarth* grants included in *jagirs* also amounted to about 24,000 rupees a year. Notable among the persons and institutions receiving these assigned revenues were the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar, the Darbar Sahib at Dera Baba Nanak, the Tahli Sahib shrine at Dera Baba Nanak, the Akhara of Gian Das in Amritsar, the Mahant of Nainakot, the establishments at Pindori, Dhianpur and Dhamtal, the Jogis of Jakhbar, the shrine of Shaikh Badruddin at Masanian, the custodians of the tombs of Mauj Darya and Shahabuddin Nagra, the shrine at Kot Mian Sahib, Bhai Nand Gopal, the Mahants of Gurdaspur, Sodhis Nihal Singh, Man Singh and Atma Singh, and the Granthis of Triloknath in Kangra originally established by Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia.<sup>39</sup>

About two decades later, the number of assignments in tahsil Pathankot was 216, assessed at less than 12,400 rupees a year. Much of the assigned revenue was held in perpetuity by 144 assignees. There were 27 *jagirdars* who held assignments worth less than 1,000 rupees for life, and the amount of 39 assignments for life was less than 1,500 rupees. There were half a dozen other assignments worth less than 150 rupees in all. In *tahsil* Gurdaspur, the number of assignees was 385 and they held lands worth nearly 29,000 rupees a year. Much of this amount, over 23,000 rupees, stood assigned in perpetuity in favour of 285 assignees. In *tahsil* Batala, the total number of assignees was 352, and out of the total assigned revenue of over 37,000 rupees about 34,400 rupees went to 203 assignees in perpetuity. The total number of assignees in the three tahsils was 953, and the total assigned revenue was about 78,500 rupees. The assignments, according to the settlement officer, were much more carefully examined now than ever before, and in his judgement there was a reduction of nearly 25 per cent in the assigned revenue for the district as a whole.<sup>40</sup> There were 7 provincial Darbaris in Gurdaspur District before the World War First, and the leading families of the district were those of Raja Sant Singh of Akhrota, Sardar Gopal Singh of Bhagowal, Sardar Hari Singh

39. *Final Report of the Revised Settlement of the Gurdaspur District*, Lahore, 1892, pp. 59-60.

40. *Final Report of the Revision of the Settlement of the Gurdaspur District*, Lahore, 1912, p. 31.

of Rangar Nangal, Rai Sheo Singh Bhandari, Sardar Hari Singh of Talwandi Lal Singh, Sardar Sarup Singh of Fatehgarh, Sardar Bhagwan Singh Panjhatha, Sardar Moti Singh of Chashma, Sardar Harnam Singh Bagga, Sardar Amrik Singh of Khunda and Mirza Sultan Ahmed of Kadian. All these families were included in the 1911 edition of the *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*.

It is interesting to note, however, that the author of the gazetteer of Gurdaspur District thought that there were several other leading men in the district whose names were worthy of being recorded. Zaildar Kishan Singh of Bham, who had helped the administration generally, was a Honorary Magistrate with the title of Sardar Sahib. Sardar Bahadur Dial Singh Man was Deputy Collector in the Canal department. Narain Singh of Singhpura, which he had newly founded, was a Sardar Sahib. His son Kishan Singh was a *zaildar*. Mian Alam Khan of Kala Afghanan did valuable work for the cooperative movement. Mian Gulam Farid of Batala did useful work as an Extra Assistant Commissioner. Mian Nazar Muhiyuddin was the head of an important religious institution in Batala. Mehr Amirullah of Kalanaur, Lala Devi Dial of Kahnuwan and Mahant Bisheshar Nath of Gurdaspur were Honorary Magistrates. For similar reasons, several other names are recorded, like Mirza Niaz Beg of Hakimpur near Kalanpur, the Tangral Rajput Chaudharis of Kathlaur and Chaudhari Mihr Singh.<sup>41</sup> From the way in which all these names are recorded it is evident that they were the new men to become important during the new regime. They were not the descendants of the *jagirdars* of the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. They were thrown up by the changed circumstances of the new regime almost as rivals to the surviving *jagirdars*.

In Amritsar District in the early 1890s, the area assigned in *jagir* was over 155,500 acres, and the total assigned revenue was over 206,500 rupees a year. The largest area assigned was in tahsil Tarn Taran, with more than 68,000 of its cultivated acres under *jagir*, the smallest area assigned was in tahsil Ajnala, amounting to less than 31,000 acres; in tahsil Amritsar the area assigned was about 50,500 acres. However, the largest amount of assigned revenue was in tahsil Amritsar, with over 80,500 rupees, followed by tahsil Tarn Taran with about 65,500 rupees. In tahsil Ajnala, the amount of assigned revenue was a little less than 60,500 rupees. Much of the assigned revenue in the district as a whole was assigned in perpetuity, either free of any condition

41. *Gazetteer of Gurdaspur District*, Lahore, 1915, pp. 55-56.

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or subject to conditions; the total amounted to about 173,000 rupees. The revenue assigned for life or lives was over 29,000 rupees. The rest of the assigned revenue was less than 4,500 rupees.<sup>42</sup> Among the large assignees were the Raja of Kapurthala and Sardar Balwant Singh of Attari in tahsil Tarn Taran, besides the Darbar at Tarn Taran. Among the smaller assignees in this tahsil were Sardar Arjan Singh Chahal, Sardar Dial Singh Majithia, Bhai Gulab Singh Arora, Mahant Niranjan Das and the Mahant of the Sikh temple at Chola. In tahsil Amritsar, the chief assignments were those of Sardar Dial Singh Majithia, Sardar Gulzar Singh Kalianwala, Raja Harbans Singh and the Sardars of Mananwala, besides the Golden Temple and the Aka 1 Bunga at Amritsar. In tahsil Ajnala, the largest *jagir* was that of Sardar Bakhshish Singh Sandhanwalia, containing some of the best and most heavily assessed villages of the tahsil. Two villages were assigned in the tahsil to the Raja of Kapurthala, and half of the village Ramdas was assigned to its Mahant. Smaller grants were enjoyed by Bhai Tara Singh, Sardar Randhir Singh and the Attari family.<sup>43</sup>

During the settlement of Amritsar District before the World War First, a considerable number of grants were found to be 'liable to resumption for persistent and flagrant breach of conditions.'<sup>44</sup> The value of assignments slightly declined in spite of the increase in assessment, obviously because of the resumptions. The number of assignees in tahsil Amritsar was 358 who enjoyed revenues worth over 73,000 rupees; in tahsil Tarn Taran, the number of assignees was 269 and they enjoyed revenues worth nearly 67,000 rupees; and in tahsil Ajnala though the number of assignees was 287 they enjoyed revenues worth about 59,000 rupees. Much of the assigned revenue was held in perpetuity, amounting to over 186,000 rupees. The amount of revenue alienated for life or lives was less than 12 000. The remaining assigned revenue was less than 1,400 rupees. No new assignment was made during the settlement of 1910-1914.<sup>45</sup> The principal assignees in Amritsar District before the World War First were still the well known Sardars of the Sandhanwalia, Attariwala and the Majithia families, with Sardar Raghbir Singh, Sardar Balwant Singh and Sardar

42. *Gazetteer of Amritsar District 1892-93* (revised edition), p. 55. Also, *Assessment Report of the Tarn Taran Tahsil*, 1891, Lahore, p. 14; *Assessment Report of the Anjala Tahsil*, Lahore, 1892, p. 61; *Assessment Report of the Amritsar Tahsil*, Lahore, 1892, p. 62.

43. *S.R. Amritsar District* Lahore, 1893, p. 55.

44. *Final Report on the Fourth Regular Settlement of the Amritsar District 1910-1914*, Lahore, 1914, p. 38.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

Dial Singh as the most eminent members respectively of these three families.<sup>46</sup>

Sardar Raghbir Singh was the only son of Sardar Bakhshish Singh who had been adopted as his son by Sardar Shamsher Singh Sandhanwalia. A provincial Darbari, Sardar Raghbir Singh enjoyed an assignment of nearly 37,000 rupees from 23 villages in tahsil Ajnala. He owned over 40,000 *kanals* of land in the districts of Amritsar, Lahore and Sialkot. He was connected by matrimony with Sardar Mahtab Singh Majithia and the Raja of Faridkot. Sardar Balwant Singh Sandhanwalia was connected with Sardar Raghbir Singh, and enjoyed a *jagir* in the district worth over 5,500 rupees. The natural father of Sardar Bakhshish Singh, Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia had died at Pondicherry in 1887 as an exile but his son Sardar Gurbachan Singh, who at one time was a statutory civilian officer in the Punjab, was allowed to reside in Delhi. The *jagir* of the family of Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia stood resumed because of his association with Maharaja Dalip Singh who was threatening to return to the Punjab as a re-converted Khalsa.<sup>47</sup>

Sardar Balwant Singh Attariwala was a grandson of the famous Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala who had died fighting in the First Anglo-Sikh War. His father, Sardar Ajit Singh, had been a prominent figure of the district for long, as an Honorary Magistrate, an Honorary Assistant Commissioner and President of the Amritsar Local Board. Sardar Balwant Singh was the eldest of his five sons, and he was educated at the Aitchison College, popularly known as the Chiefs College, at Lahore. The property of his father, valued at 5 lakhs of rupees was divided amongst all the brothers, but the *jagir* worth about 12,000 rupees devalued upon Sardar Balwant Singh. The fourth son of Sardar Ajit Singh, Sardar Jaswant Singh received a direct commission in the 11th K.E.O. Lancers and was a Risaldar. The youngest son of Sardar Ajit Singh, Basant Singh was in the Imperial Cadet Corps and having died in 1905 was succeeded in his *jagir* by his minor son Mahendra Singh. There were two other branches of the Attariwala family represented by Nihal Singh and Amar Singh. The former was a grandson of Sardar Chattar Singh who was the most prominent figure in the anti-British uprising of 1848-49. Nihal Singh was educated at Cambridge, and held property worth 25,000 rupees a year in Uttar Pradesh. Sardar Amar Singh's *ta' alluqa* in Awadh was worth

46. *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, Lahore, 1914, pp. 41-44.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

25,000 rupees a year.<sup>48</sup>

Sardar Dial Singh Majithia was the only son of Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia who, like his own father Sardar Desa Singh Majithia, was a man of mark in the early 19th century. Sardar Dial Singh went to England after resigning an Honorary Magistrateship at Amritsar. After his return from England, he started residing at Lahore, taking interest in social reform and constitutional politics. Before his death in 1893, without an issue, he left all his ancestral property to his first cousin Sardar Gajendra Singh, who himself died in 1903 leaving behind an infant daughter besides his widow. The rest of Sardar Dial Singh's property, amounting to some 25 lakhs of rupees, was devoted to various public and charitable purposes. The chief of his bequests were for the Dial Singh College, the Dial Singh Library and *The Tribune*.

The second branch of the Majithias was represented by the sons of Raja Surat Singh who had remained under cloud for some time after the annexation because of his alleged or real complicity in the uprising of 1848-49. He had done signal service, however, in 1857-58, when he was severely wounded fighting on the side of the British. He received a large *jagir* in Gorakhpur District in Uttar Pradesh as a reward for his services. He was allowed to return to Majithia with the title of Raja. Upon his death in 1881, he was succeeded by his sons Umrao Singh and Sundar Singh, both educated at the Aitchison College at Lahore. Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia came into much greater prominence than his brother. He was connected with the Raja of Faridkot and the Chief of Bhadaur through matrimony, was a Fellow of the Panjab University, and a member of the Provincial Legislative Council. He was intimately connected with the Singh Sabha reform and Sikh education, and he was to remain a representative of the Sikh community in the Unionist ministries. The third branch of the Majithias was much less important than the other two, and its important members served in the army.<sup>49</sup>

The account of the families of the Sandhanwalia, Attariwala and the Majithia Sardars indicates that though all of them went down in relative terms, some of them adjusted themselves better to the changed situation than others. This was true of the other *jagirdars* of the district. Sardar Gulzar Singh Kalianwala, a descendant through adoption of the well known Sardar Fateh Singh of Kala Ghanapur

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.



near Amritsar, was an Honorary Magistrate and a provincial Darbari in the early 20th century, enjoying a *jagir* worth 14,600 rupees a year and owning other property in land and houses. Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh, son of Bhai Parduman Singh, was educated in England and held a Chair in the Viceregal Darbar; he remained connected with the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar, like his father and grandfather, and took active interest in the affairs of Khalsa College at Amritsar. The younger grandson of Raja Sir Sahib Dial, Thakur Mahan Chand was an Honorary Magistrate and an Honorary Extra Assistant Commissioner, and a member of the Punjab Legislative Council. He was also a provincial Darbari. Sardar Bahadur Arur Singh of Naushahra near Amritsar was an Honorary Magistrate, a provincial Darbari and Manager of the Golden Temple. For his good services in this last capacity he was made a companion of the Order of the Indian Empire in 1913. In addition to the family *jagir*, he held 800 *ghumaons* of land in Amritsar District and 33 squares of land in the canal colonies. The descendants of Sardar Fateh Singh at Mananwala were rather unimportant in the early decades of the 20th century. The Rasulpuria Sardars improved upon their position during the period of British rule by serving the new rulers. Sir Jogendra Singh, who became nearly as well known in the 20th century as Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, belonged to this family. Sardar Thakur Singh Dhillon of Panjwar, a descendant of the redoubtable Sikh Chief Hari Singh Bhangi, recovered a small part of the ground lost by the Bhangis in the early 19th century. There were a dozen other families in the district regarded as 'notable,' some of them gaining in importance and others losing.<sup>50</sup>

Nearly a quarter of a century later, the situation changed further. The Sadhanwalia Sardar Raghbir Singh was more interested in his industrial concerns in Uttar Pradesh than in the affairs of Amritsar District, but his son Harinder Singh had taken his position, the value of the family *jagir* being still over 37,000 rupees a year. Among the Majithias, the family of Raja Surat Singh, represented by Sir Sundar Singh, clearly came up and the family of Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia clearly went down. Sardar Buta Singh of Naushahra was maintaining the tradition of his father Sardar Arur Singh, the last manager of the Golden Temple. After Sir Sundar Singh's death in 1941, Sardar Jogendar Singh of Rasulpur appeared to be the most eminent individual in the realm of politics and government. Sardar Hardit Singh Dhillon of Panjwar enjoyed considerable respect and

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-49.

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influence in the district. At Mananwala, Sardar Atma Singh recovered some of the lost importance. The Attari family was in eclipse. Some of the other important families had either severed their connection with the district or had lost in wealth and importance. In the cities and towns, individuals connected with commerce and industry had gained in importance, like Rai Bahadur Lala Duni Chand, Rai Sahib Lala Bishan Das, Rai Bahadur Gujjar Mal and Rai Sahib Vaishno Das. New persons in the countryside as well as in cities and towns had become worthy of mention in the district, like Zaildar Kapur Singh, Zaildar Dharm Singh, Risaldar Ajit Singh, Zaildar Chaudhari Shahabudin, Zaildar Chanda Singh, Zaildar Chaudhari Gulam Rasul, Zaildar Chaudhari Harnam Singh and Sardar Gopal Singh. The Punjab Legislative Assembly too was no longer the preserve of the chiefs and families of note. Men from the new middle class were representing the people of the city and the district of Amritsar. Among the member of the Assembly were Mir Maqbul Mahmud, Chaudhari Faqir Husain Khan, Khan Sahib Fazal Din, Shaikh Sadiq Hasan, Dr Sant Ram Seth, Sardar Kishan Singh, Sohan Singh Josh and Partap Singh Kairon.<sup>51</sup>

#### IV

We have already noticed that revenue assigned to important religious personages and institutions was included by the British administrators in '*jagirs*.' The distinctions made was not between secular and *dharmarth* grants, or between revenues assigned for service to the state and charitable purposes, but between large and small assignments. This distinction became more and more clear with the passage of time so that all assignments of revenue came to be divided into two categories : *jagirs* and *mu'afis*. The former category was meant to refer to mainly secular but all large grants and the latter was meant to refer to small grants of various categories, including *dharmarth* grants.

In the first administration, report of the Punjab there is an interesting reference to endowments, 'both secular and religious.' They were meant for the support of temples, mosques, places of pilgrimage and devotion, schools, village inns for the reception of travellers, paupers and strangers, generally of a monastic character. These institutions are ornaments to the villages; they have some architectural pretension, and being embosomed in trees, are often the only shady spots in the neighbourhood. They add much to the comfort of rustic life and keep alive a spirit of hospitality and piety

51. *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, Chandigarh (1947), 57-61.

among the agricultural people.<sup>52</sup> Grants given to these institutions were generally maintained, particularly when they were insignificant in amount.

In the early settlement reports of the districts of Gurdaspur and Amritsar, there are reference to revenue from land alienated in favour of persons other than the '*jagirdars*.' In the *parganas* of Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Batala, the total *jama* consisted of four heads: *khalisa*, *jagir*, *in'am* or *in'am-i-zamindari*, and *ta'alluqdari*.<sup>53</sup> However, the amount of *in'am* and *ta'alluqdari* did not form any important proportion of the total revenue. In tahsil Batala, for instance, *in'am* and *ta'alluqdari* amounted to only 3,680 rupees in a total revenue of about 381,000 rupees; the amount of *jagirs* in the tahsil at this time was about 119,000 rupees.<sup>54</sup> It is clarified in the report on *pargana* Adinanagar (later Gurdaspur) that *in'am* was given to 'privileged headmen' and *ta'alluqdari* dues were payable by the proprietors of particular villages; the village headman or *lambardars* generally received 5 per cent of the revenues collected by them.<sup>55</sup> For the *pargana* of Batala, there is a reference kept for *in'am* and *ta'alluqdari* allowances, which suggests that the recipients of these allowances did not collect them directly from the cultivators or proprietors. There is also a reference to 'resumed maafees'.<sup>56</sup>

In the settlement report of Amritsar District too there are references to *in'am* and *ta'alluqdari* allowances, and the amounts involved are very small. The amount of *in'am* in the *pargana* of Sowrian, for instance, was only 1,320 rupees in a total revenue of over 273,000 rupees. The amount of *ta'alluqdari* allowances in the *pargana* of Amritsar was only 234 rupees, while the amount of *inam* was less than 3,500 rupees in a total revenue of over 432,000 rupees. There is a reference also to *lakhiraj* or petty rent-free tenures, which amounted to about 15,500 rupees in Sowrian, about 19,500 rupees in Amritsar, and to over 12,250 rupees in Tarn Taran.<sup>57</sup> The petty rent-free grants, like the *jagirs*, were liable to resumption in certain situations. In 1852 in tahsil Amritsar, for instance, petty-rent-free grants worth over 6,700 rupees were resumed.<sup>58</sup> This is understandable because, like the *jagirs*,

52. *Punjab Administration Report 1849-51*, Calcutta, 1853, p. 123.

53. *S.R. Gurdaspur District 1859*, pp. 5 and 7.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 24 and 27-28.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

57. *S.R. Amritsar District 1860*, pp. 4 and 6-7.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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the *mu'afis* were given for life as well as in perpetuity.<sup>59</sup>

In his statistical report, R.N. Cust refers to *in'am* as revenue from land alienated in favour of *lambardars*, but he adds *chaudharis* and *safed-poshes* to the list of those who received 'certain portions of revenue land, known under the former regime as "inams": their new grants they will hold of the British Government conditionally on good local service in times of peace as well as disturbance, and one of the family, according to fitness and capacity, will succeed to the privilege, which will not be divisible under the laws of inheritance.'<sup>60</sup> Cust refers to the *ta'alluqdars* as rather few in number, and having no concern with the land but getting a quit-rent. There were actually 159 *ta'alluqdars* in the tahsils of Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Batala, Amritsar, Ajnala and Tarn Taran, receiving less than 2,000 rupees as quit-rent in addition to about 60 maunds of grain. The lands of which they were erstwhile owner were in 66 villages.<sup>61</sup> Then there were the holders of revenue free plots, called *mu'afidars*. Their total number in the six tahsils of the Upper Bari Doab was nearly 15,850 and they held plots of revenue free land in more than 2,600 villages. The area covered by such alienation of revenue was more than 73,000 *ghumaons*, and revenue alienated amounted to nearly 119,000 rupees. The number of *mu'afidars* for life was 12,500 and they enjoyed grants worth more than 88,000 rupees. The number of grantees holding the revenues in perpetuity was less than 1,400 and they received a little over 15,500 rupees a year. All other grantees got less than 5,000 rupees a year. Thus, on the whole, the number of grantees was pretty large but the average amount of grant was very small, each grantee on the average getting less than 8 rupees a year. Those who held grants for life were the most numerous, creating the possibility of reduction in the total amount of revenue alienated in favour of the *mu'afidars*.<sup>62</sup>

Indeed, in tahsil Pathankot in 1889-90, the number of acres assigned to petty grantees had fallen to less than 2,600 from nearly 9,000 in the 1850s, and the amount of assigned revenue had fallen to less than 4,500 rupees from over 15,000 rupees in the 1850s.<sup>63</sup>

Similarly in tahsil Gurdaspur, the fall in acres during this period was from nearly 16,000 to a little less than 6,000; the fall in the amount of assigned revenue was from nearly 25,000 rupees to a little over 9,000

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 30 and 51.

60. R.N. Cust, *Statistical Report*, para 29 and Appendix XXII.

61. *Ibid.*, para 16 and Appendix XVI B.

62. *Ibid.*, para 19 and Appendix XX A & B.

63. *Assessment Report of the Pathankot Tahsil*, Lahore, 1891, p. 17.

rupees. The comment of the settlement officer was that this great reduction had taken place because most of the petty *mu'afis* had been granted for life.<sup>64</sup> On a similar reduction in the acreage and amount of revenue alienated to petty grantees in tahsil Batala, the settlement officer remarked that petty grants were becoming rather unimportant.<sup>65</sup> In the settlement report of Gurdaspur District in 1912, there is no reference to petty grants, though the petty grantees were in existence.<sup>66</sup> This may be regarded as a reflection of their reduced importance. Already at the previous settlement some of the petty grantees had been persuaded to become occupancy tenants for the plots they were holding.<sup>67</sup> In the gazetteer of the district in 1914, the revenue assignments are equated with *jagirs*, and about the *ta'alluqdars* it is stated that the most notable instances were only two: the Mughals of Kadian and the Khatri of Kalanaur.<sup>68</sup>

In Amritsar District in the early 1890s, there were a few scattered instances of *talukdari* tenures, found mostly in Rajput villages.<sup>69</sup> Of the total assigned revenue, which amounted to over 229,500 rupees, less than 23,500 rupees went to *mu'afidars*, and the village service grants were less than 2,500 rupees.<sup>70</sup> Where the village service grants was less than three acres and the order of release was for the life of the holder, orders were issued by the Settlement Collector that the *mu'afidar* was to hold the grant till his death. After that the owners of the village had the liberty to do what they liked with the grant for the rest of the term of the settlement, including the option to resume it in their own favour.<sup>71</sup> During the settlement of 1910-1914, it was discovered that hundreds of such grants were taken over by the owners but the revenue was not paid to the government. Therefore the revenue assessed was made a part of the *khalisa*.<sup>72</sup> With the decreasing amount and importance of the *mu'afis* the settlement reports and gazetteers of the 20th century omit detail of such grants. The interest of the administrators in the *in'amdars* was not because of the amount of the alienated revenue involved but because of the importance of the Lambardars, Zaildars and the *safed-poshes* in the administration of the countryside, particularly the revenue administration.

64. *Assessment Report of the Gurdaspur Tahsil*, Lahore, 1891, pp. 13 and 14.

65. *Assessment Report of the Batala Tahsil*, Lahore, 1889, p. 37.

66. *S.R. Gurdaspur District 1912*, pp. 12 and 31. Registers were prepared for *mu'afi* grants as well as *jagirs*, but under 'revenue assignment's only *jagirs* are discussed.

67. *S.R. Gurdaspur District 1892*, p. 61.

68. *Gazetteer of Gurdaspur District*, Lahore, 1915, pp. 165 and 177.

69. *Gazetteer of Amritsar District 1892-93*, p. 69.

70. *S.R. Amritsar District 1888-1893*, p. 58.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

72. *S.R. Amritsar District 1910-1914*, p. 39.

# The Swadeshi Movement in the Punjab (1904-1907)

SUKHDEV SINGH SOHAL\*

In the Punjab constructive Swadeshi in the fields of banking, insurance and education had roots to the 1890s and there had been moves to organise a boycott of foreign cloth after the countervailing excise of 1895.<sup>1</sup> With the Land Alienation Act of 1901, the availability of major avenues for investing surplus capital was closed to the urban middle classes because of their traditionally mercantile background. Moreover, Lord Curzon's (1899-1905) arbitrary administrative measures, provocative remarks in the Calcutta University convocation address,<sup>2</sup> and the announcement of the Partition of Bengal on 16 October 1905, turned the rising discontent among the educated middle classes into eloquent protests. They advocated the cause of indigenous industry by actively supporting the Swadeshi movement.<sup>3</sup> A meeting was held at Lahore on 17th October 1905 to form the Punjab Swadeshi Association. The object of the meeting was to encourage and improve the manufacture and provide information about the indigenous articles :

- (a) by taking pledges;
- (b) by opening Indian stores and show rooms;
- (c) collection of information;
- (d) by introducing machines.<sup>4</sup>

In this process of politicization, students and pleaders assumed a significant role. They advocated Swadeshi and took pledges to use

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1. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947*, Delhi, 1983, pp. 126-27.

Nearly 1500 participants gathered at Town Hall under the leadership of Lala Murlidhar. Meetings were held at Peshawar, Abbotabad, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Sialkot, Wazirabad, Gujranwala, Lyallpur, Ludhiana, Gujrat, Gurdaspur and Batala.

2. *The Panjabee*, April 24, 1905.

3. *The Tribune*, 12 December 1906; *The Panjabee*, 12 December 1906; *Selections from the Native Newspapers*, Punjab 27 January 1907, p. 27 (henceforth cited as *SFVN, PB*).

4. *The Panjabee*, 23 October 1905.

home-made goods. Boycott became a weapon *par excellence* of the weak against the strong.<sup>5</sup> Ideological basis of Swadeshi movement advocated national interest against the interests of British imperialism. Appeals were made that things made in India must be used by everyone to the rigid exclusion of all foreign goods.<sup>6</sup> Swadeshi goods meant all Asiatic goods. Entry of the Japanese goods into Indian market was welcomed by the Swadeshi leaders.<sup>7</sup> In the absence of Japanese goods the people might buy French, German made articles but not the goods made in the United Kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

2.1 When the government paid no heed to public meetings, the boycott of English goods became the next weapon in the form of Swadeshi movement which encouraged indigenous industries. The movement also brought into politics, among others, the newly emerged middle classes, especially the educated class, without distinction of caste and creed.<sup>9</sup> In 1906, the Swadeshi Vastu Parcharak Sabha was established as a vehicle for the movement.<sup>10</sup> Swadeshi method boycotting of English goods was considered as perfectly legitimate and constitutional method of political agitation.<sup>11</sup>

2.2 In order to impress upon the people, leaders of the Swadeshi movement exhibited home-made goods to the audience extolling their superiority over foreign products. A strike was held in the Government College, Lahore, where the Principal of the College had ordered that the students should wear blazers made of English cloth only. Students went back to their classes only when the Principal withdrew his orders.<sup>12</sup> In Rawalpindi, Lala Ram Ditta Mal, Headmaster of the local High School, held meeting of 500 students for

5. *Home/Judicial Confidential-A/Nos. 196-204*, May 1906. *The Tribune*, 14 October; 14 September 1905; *The Panjabee*, 16 October 1905.
6. *The Panjabee*, 11 September 1906.
7. *The Panjabee*, 18 September 1905. A Society was in existence in the early 1880s in Lahore under the name of *Swadeshi Vastu Sabha*. It also held meetings regularly : *The Tribune*, 21 September 1905.
8. *The Panjabee*, 11 September 1906.
9. Swadeshi Bandhu, *SFVN*, PB, 15 December 1906, p. 306. See also, Bipan Chandra, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in Modern India (1880-1805)*, New Delhi, 1969, p. 122.
10. *The Tribune*, 12 December 1906; *The Panjabee*, 12 December 1906. In the Punjab, Mul Raj had established the first *Swadeshi Vastu Pracharni Sabha* in 1893 : D.K. Chaudhary, "Mul Raj : A Progressive Nationalist," *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, Patiala, 1978, p. 112.
11. *Light*, Lahore 14 December, *SFVN*, PB, 15 December 1906; *The Panjabee*, 17 July 1907.
12. S.R. Sharma, *Punjab in the Ferment*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 10.

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preaching the use of Swadeshi goods and to cooperate in a big way. The students took pledge to use home-made goods only.<sup>13</sup> With the efforts of students, a meeting advocating Swadeshi was held at Lahore on 23 September 1905. Several students took pledges to use home-made goods. The speakers on the occasion included Wazir Mohammad, Lala Balak Ram, Lala Hari Krishan and Ram Narayan Gupta.<sup>14</sup>

2.3. The pleaders played a significant role in advocating the cause of Swadeshi. A meeting held on 2nd August 1905, which was addressed by Lala Kanhiya Lal, a pleader, was attended by 200 lawyers and traders.<sup>15</sup> On 29th September, approximately 1000 people attended the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Malik Bhagwan Das, a pleader. On 30 September Mool Chand, again a pleader presided over a meeting and the people took pledges to use only Swadeshi goods. However, the government made some arrests to keep down the tempo of the movement.<sup>16</sup> In an other meeting at Gujranwala on 3rd October, about 200 people, mostly from the educated middle class, participated. Among them the prominent personalities were Lala Amarnath, a pleader, Kewal Krishan, M. Illahi Bux, Chet Singh, P.C. Chatterjee, Lala Hakim Rai and Pandit Kedar Nath Sharma.<sup>17</sup> Still another meeting was held at Lahore on 12 October 1905, in which 3000 persons participated. It was presided over by Roshan Lal, Barrister-at-Law. Other speakers included the editor and the proprietor of local newspapers like the *Daily Time* and the *Paisa Akhbar*.<sup>18</sup> The Swadeshi Vastu Prachar Sabha, Rawalpindi organised a meeting on 15 October 1905 under the Chairmanship of Lala Hans Raj Sawhney. Emphasis was put on the non-political character of the movement.<sup>19</sup>

2.4. On 22nd October 1905, both Hindus and Muslims assembled in Queen's Garden at Rawalpindi to encourage the use of indigenous goods.<sup>20</sup> On the same day, the Punjab Swadeshi Association with

13. S.C. Mittal, *Freedom Movement in the Punjab (1905-29)*, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 26-27.

14. *The Panjabee*, 16 October 1905; *The Tribune*, 14 October 1905.

15. *The Tribune*, 14 September 1905; *Home/Judicial-Confidential-A/Nos.*, 196-204, May 1906.

16. Pandit Kanshi Prasad was arrested on 3rd October 1905 for making a speech on Swadeshi : *The Tribune*, 10 October 1905.

17. *The Panjabee*, 18 October 1905.

18. *The Tribune*, 14 October 1905; *The Panjabee*, 16 October 1905.

19. *Ibid.*, 19 October 1905.

20. *Ibid.*, 24 October 1905.



professor Ruchi Ram Sahni as its President convened a mass meeting at Lahore which was attended by about 8000 persons. Babu K.P. Chatterjee of *The Tribune*, Pandit Harnam Singh, Lala Gopinath and Dr Gokal Chand Narang also advocated the cause of Swadeshi. The slogans like 'Swadeshi Vastu ki Jai' and 'Bande Matram' were raised on the occasion.<sup>21</sup> A vigorous campaign was launched against the use of foreign sugar because it had entirely superseded the Indian sugar and there was religious prejudice against it.<sup>22</sup> The people were reminded that in the absence of a policy of protection, Indians should buy Indian goods in order to remove the dependence on foreign manufacturers. Patriotic 'stores' were opened to provide essential goods to the people.<sup>23</sup> The Ludhiana cloth, the Gurjat cloth and similiary other types of indigenous cloth were the manifestation of the Swadeshi cult. The Kashmiri *pattus*, the Kulu blankets and Amritsar *shawls* where quite popular.<sup>24</sup> In order to contain the influence of professional middle classes, the government modified the Rules of Government Servants Conduct Rules 1904 emphasising that the 'government servant may not take part in or subscribe in aid of any political movement in India or relating to Indian affairs.'<sup>25</sup>

3.1. Though the movement slowed down after 1907, it remained one of the political and economic weapons to deal with the British goods. In fact, high virtue was attached to the idea which also underlined love for the motherland.<sup>26</sup> Due to class interests, however, the movement remained confined to urban centres. It got wide publicity because of the control of its protagonists over the local press. The passivity of rural base and narrow class base of professional middle classes became conspicuous during the Swadeshi movement.<sup>27</sup> When the controversy over the separation of judicial and executive functions gained momentum in 1906, it was silenced over a point that separation would put more powers in the hands of legal

21. *The Panjabee*, 23 October 1905,

22. *Ibid.*, 6 June 1906.

23. *The Tribune*, 7 November 1905.

24. *The Panjabee*, 6 June; 15 December 1906.

25. *The Tribune*, 2 February 1906.

26. Lala Duni Chand, an advocate of Ambala, reading his paper to the students entitled 'What Swadeshimism Means,' said in 1935 that 'it is an embracing Dharm. It is not a creed or a slogan. It means love for all Indians'; *The Tribune*, 1 March 1935.

27. Sukhdev Singh Sohal, "Professional Middle Classes in the Punjab," *Journal of Regional History*, Amritsar, Vol. III, 1982, p. 83.

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practitioners who were chief supporters of political bodies.<sup>28</sup> In 1906, *Anjuman-i-Muhibban-i-Watan* was formed. Its leaders, Ajit Singh, Sufi Amba Prasad, Lala Chand Falak, were forceful writers who along with Lala Lajpat Rai succeeded in channelling the discontentment of rural and urban people into anti-British activity.<sup>29</sup> Ajit Singh through his speeches appealed to peasantry and commercial middle classes for channelling their energies against the British rule.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, the pulls of caste, of community, of religion and consciousness of one's heritage conditioned political thinking and actions.<sup>31</sup>

3.2. The Swadeshi spirit existed in the Punjab during the late 19th century. However, the Land Alienation Act, Lord Curzon's arbitrary measures and Japanese victory over Russia rekindled this spirit. The partition of Bengal provided immediate spark. It activated the urban and educated classes in the Punjab. It was delinked from the Bengal partition issue primarily because it was feared that in case partition is revoked the Swadeshi struggle would lapse prematurely. Its non-political character was emphasised to win over the Muslim sympathesis. However, the movement achieved partial successes in advancing the cause of economic nationalism. The process of mass mobilization was initiated which remained confined to urban centres. The nationalist press reported the proceedings of the mass meetings extensively.

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28. Denzil Ibbetson remarked that the British laws govern most backward people in India and few 'advanced' people should realise this dichotomy. The time is for strengthening the executive : *Home/Judicial-Confidential-A/Nos. 196-204*, May 1906.

29. N.G. Barrier, "Punjab Disturbance of 1907," *The Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, Vol VIII, Part II, 1974, pp. 460-97.

30. *Home/Political-A/Nos. 184-235*, August 1907.

31. *Home/Political-A/Nos. 241*, August 1907. See also, V.N. Datta, *Ideology of the Political Elite in Punjab (1900-20)*, Sita Ram Kohli Memorial Lectures, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1977, p. 2.

## Ghulam Muhayy-ud-Din alias Bute Shah

DR BHAGAT SINGH\*

Ghulam Muhayy-ud-Din alias Bute Shah, the author of *Tawarikh-i-Punjab*, was the inhabitant of Ludhiana. He completed his book in 1848. Some writers believe that it was finished in 1842. The author says that he was asked to write this book by George Russel Clark, Agent to the Governor-General, who succeeded Lieut. Col. Wade in 1840. Little can be learnt from this chronicle or other sources about the author but he was apparently employed in the British Agency at Ludhiana. On more than one occasion Bute Shah visited the Sikh court in 1837, with a British delegation and was rewarded by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to which Sohan Lal Suri refers in his *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh* in the following words: "Bute Shah visited the court of the Sarkar (Maharaja Ranjit Singh), along with Munshi Shahamat Ali and was awarded Rs. 100/- and trays of sweets."<sup>1</sup> "Bute Shah visited the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh along with Rai Gobind Jas and Munshi Shahamat Ali and had a talk with the Sarkar about the cis-Satluj country."<sup>2</sup> Rai Gobind Jas, Munshi Shahamat Ali and Bute Shah interviewed the Sarkar in the company of Aziz-ud-Din and were granted robes of honour consisting of seven garments and Rs. 100/- for Bute Shah."<sup>3</sup>

This *Tawarikh* (or *Tarikh*) consist of *muqadama* (an introduction), five *daftars* and a *khatima* (epilogue). In the introduction the geographical condition of the Punjab, its important places, towns and its products, etc., have been discussed.

*Daftar I* relates to the Hindu period of Punjab history. Its contents are derived from religious sources as *Shri Bhagwat Gita*, *Mahabharat*, and other sacred books of the Hindus. This *daftar* contains an account of the Hindu Rajas upto Rai Pithora.

*Daftar II* deals in outline with the Muslim period of Indian

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1. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Daftar III, Lahore, 1885-89, p. 426.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 430.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 432.
4. Bute Shah, *Tawarikh-i-Punjab* (1848), MS., Ganda Singh Personal Collection, Patiala, pp. 1-2.

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history. It narrates the history of the country from the Ghaznvides to Emperor Aurangzeb. This section is based on historical treatises such as, *Habib-ul-Sayyar*, *Masar-ul-Muluk*, *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, *Tarikh-i-Ahl-i-Asir*, *Tarikh-Banakani*, *Jama-ul-Haikayet*, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* and *Tarikh-i-Guzida*. This daftar throws light on the history of the Punjab.

*Daftar III* : As the author states its contents are drawn from the books already within on the subject. It comprises short life sketches of the ten Gurus of the Sikhs, and a brief account of their descendants—Bedis and Sodhis. For writing this daftar he has made use of the works of Sohan Lal Suri, Khair-ud-Din Mufti, Ahmad Shah Batalia and verified many things from the *granthis* and aged Sikhs.<sup>4</sup>

*Daftar IV* : It describes the rise and growth of the Sikh confederacies in the Punjab. Bute Shah has not disclosed his sources of information, but is a comprehensive survey of the rise of the Sikh Misals and Chief's houses after the dissolution of the Mughal empire, the account though secondary, is very useful and obviously, very reliable as most of it is corroborated by contemporary and semi-contemporary sources.

*Daftar V* : This part of the book forms about one half of the whole volume and contains a detailed history of the rise, growth and consolidation of Ranjit Singh's power in the Punjab and the neighbouring territories. The author has not revealed his sources of information, but it must be inferred that part of it, particularly later one was contemporary. The author may have had access to the British Political Agent at Ludhiana. Bute Shah's account of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was found to be fairly reliable by such authorities on the period as Captains Murray and Wade, who had personal recollection of the events. J.D. Cunningham, for example, states that "Captain Murray, the Political Agent at Ambala and Captain Wade, the Political Agent at Ludhiana, each wrote a narrative of the life of Ranjit Singh... . The two narratives in question were, indeed, mainly prepared from accounts drawn up by intelligent Indians at the requisition of the English functionaries, and of these the chronicles of Bute Shah, a Muhammadan, and Sohan Lal, a Hindu, are the best known and may be had for purchase."<sup>5</sup>

We are exclusively interested in daftars III, IV and V that deal with the Sikhs. As told earliest daftar III deals with the Sikh Gurus. The author based his chronicle on the prevalent Sikh tradition. He tries to be as true to the tradition as possible. He is not hostile to the

5. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs* (1849), New Delhi, 1955, p. 96.

Sikhs but he does commit errors unintentionally.

According to Bute Shah Guru Nanak met Baba Farid Shakarganj<sup>6</sup> which is historically incorrect. Guru Nanak was born two hundred and four years after Baba Farid's death. According to the author Guru Nanak used to wear Muslim dress and he visited holy places of both the major communities of the country, the Hindus and Muslims, and considered both the Hindus and Muslims equally worthy of respect. This was exactly in conformity with his religious ideas and his faith in the brotherhood of mankind. He gives an account of some of the important place of pilgrimage connected with Guru Nanak. He also gives the names of some of Guru Nanak's close disciples and adds brief notes on Baba Budha, Bhai Mardana and Bhai Lehna.

At places, Bute Shah tries to give a critical account of the lives of the Gurus. He discusses different versions relating to the important incidents of their lives. He mentions about the *langar* of Guru Angad where meals for thousands of men were prepared every day,<sup>7</sup> and Guru Amar Das's *baoli* at Goindwal. He gives details about the *baoli*, as to how it was dug, practices connected with it, its sanctity and its importance as a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs.<sup>8</sup> The author also refers to the *manji* system, appointing twenty two leading Sikhs as preachers.<sup>9</sup> Bute Shah gives the story of Bibi Bhani's asking for *Gurugaddi* to remain in the Sodhi family. The Guru accepted the request of his daughter.<sup>10</sup> The fourth Guru, Ram Das excavated the *sarovar* at Chak Guru and named it Amritsar (tank of the water of immortality). The town grown around the tank also came to be known as Amritsar.

According to Bute Shah during the period of Guru Arjan the foundation of the Harmandir Sahib was laid by Mian Mir.<sup>11</sup> The author narrates the *maryada* or practice followed at Harmandir Sahib, including the regular *kirtan* and huge assemblage of the Sikhs there during the Diwali and Baisakhi. The author also mentions the compilation of the *Adi Granth* by Guru Arjan. He gives a detailed account of Guru Arjan's martyrdom. He fixes the responsibility of this most tragic incident solely on Chandu Shah as the Guru had refused the hand of the former's daughter for the later's son. Bute Shah

6. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

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says that Chandu Shah bore deep hostility against the Guru. It just happened that Jahangir on his way to Kashmir stopped at Lahore for a while. Chandu told the Emperor that the Guru was harbouring designs of revolt against the government. The Emperor called Guru Arjan and found him to be a very good-natured and a saintly person. But Chandu Shah put the Guru in his own prison where he was tortured and then put into the river where he died.<sup>12</sup> On the face of it, this is an incorrect story. Chandu was nobody to torture the Guru to death. Either the author has not read *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* or he is intentionally saving the Emperor from the charge of murdering the innocent Guru.

He gives an account of Guru Hargobind's birth, marriages and the births of his children with dates. The whole account of the Gurus is mostly based on prevalent tradition, but at places it is critical and he gives his own views also. He has presented the government versions based on the wrong or prejudiced reports of the imperial intelligencers. For example, Guru Tegh Bahadur was said to have collected big force in the Malwa and he gave asylum to the defectors from the Mughals. The Guru was called to Delhi to present himself to the Emperor Aurangzeb. But the Emperor was not in Delhi at that time. The Guru was executed there.

The creation of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh and his battles against the Mughals, his relations with Emperor Bahadur Shah and finally his death by an assassin's dagger at Nander have been recorded in detail according to the current stories. Bute Shah is particular about giving dates to all important events in the lives of the Sikh Gurus. The dates may be wrong here and there but has certainly taken pains of to collect information from the Sikh and non-Sikh sources and recorded the same in his book.

Bute Shah informs his readers that his account of Banda Singh is based on *Tarikh-i-Hind* of Ahmed Shah Batalia and Sohan Lal Suri's *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*.<sup>13</sup> Arming himself adequately and collecting a large number of armed followers Banda Singh issued an ultimatum to the people of Sirhind to accept his overlordship otherwise they would be militarily proceeded against. Consequent upon non-compliance Sirhind was attacked and besides so many others Sher Muhammad Khan and Khwaja Ali of Malerkotla died fighting against Banda.<sup>14</sup> As corroborated by Bute Shah it was a practice with Banda

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

to ask the people of a town or *ilaqa* to surrender to his authority before he launched a massive attack against them. The author has given a detailed account of Banda Singh's activities for seven long years against the Mughal Government. The author has mentioned Banda Singh establishing himself in the fort of Mukhlispur near Sadhaura in the present Ambala district of Haryana state. Bahadur Shah came to the Punjab to supervise operations against Banda Singh. Before action could be taken against him he escaped from Mukhlispur.

Bute Shah wrongly writes that Banda Singh's men demolished mosques and mausoleums.<sup>15</sup> The author gives a detailed account of the strong action against Banda Singh by Emperors Bahadur Shah, Jahandar Shah and Farrukh Siyar but he stoutly held out against them in the face of his limitations in regard to his resources. Bute Shah informs us that Banda Singh was duly baptised by Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>16</sup> Farrukh Siyar deputed Abdus Samad Khan to take necessary action against Banda Singh. He was captured from Gurdas Nangal and taken to Delhi where he was executed. The account of Banda Singh's last days is sketchy. Sometimes Bute Shah skips over important events where he feels that the government had been oppressive and tyrannical. He tries to keep his account balanced and unprejudiced. But in the remote recesses of his heart Bute Shah is a Muhammadan and where possible he tries to exonerate a Muslim ruler of his oppressive policy. He does save his coreligionists from the blame of their being, at times, inhumanly cruel but at the same time he does not divert the charge on the people wronged against. He gets silent over such incidents.

Daftar IV deals with the Sikh confederacies or the Sikh Misals. This section of the book is very important but he does not reveal his sources.

In the introduction for this daftar the author has named the twelve Misals. In the book he writes nothing about the Shahid or Nihang Misal. The remaining eleven Misals have been covered. He writes that some Misals are named after the *ilaqas* to which their jurisdiction were extended, some were named after the villages or towns to which the Sardars belonged and some to the habits of the Sardars.<sup>17</sup> The Nakkais were named after the territory of Nakka. The Ahluwalias, Faizullapurias, Sukarchakias, Dallewalias and Kanaihyas derived their

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15. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

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titles from the villages to which the Sardars of those Misals belonged. The Bhangis took the name from its leader's addiction to *bhang*—an intoxicating preparation of hemp.

Bute Shah provides very useful information regarding the mutual relations of the Sardars of the Misals and their treatment of the peasants and the people at large. In the interest of the community the Sardars forgot their differences and personal rivalries. So it was because of this that "when they planned to lead an incursion in some direction they did it with concord, and because of the unison they emerged victorious wherever they went."<sup>18</sup> According to the author, "when even a Sardar of ten troopers placed an area under his *rakhi* even of the biggest Sardars having five hundred or more troopers, under him could not interfere in that area."<sup>19</sup> Bute Shah's above observation has been corroborated by an earlier and contemporary writers. "Whenever a *zamindar* has agreed to pay this tribute (*rakhi*) to any Sikh chief, that chief not only himself refrains from plundering him, but will protect him from all others; and this protection is by general consent held so far sacred, that even if the grand army passes through a *zamindari* where the safeguards of the lowest Sikh chief are stationed, it will not violate them."<sup>20</sup>

Bute Shah says that the general rate, on the whole, at which a Sikh chief received his share of the produce was one third or one fourth. This was just a rule but in actual practice it was one eighth or one tenth. In their days the subjects lived in prosperity and enjoyed the magnanimity of the Sardars. They gave *jagirs* in *dharamarath* to saintly persons without discrimination in grantee, whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. They never deprived a woman of her ornaments or jewellery.<sup>21</sup> The treatment of the woman by the Sikhs has been eulogized by a much earlier writer Qazi Nur Muhammaud in 1765. He says 'the Sikhs, would not plunder the wealth and ornaments of a woman, be she a well-to-do lady or a maid-servant.'<sup>22</sup>

Bute Shah says that after the first leaders or Sardars died their successors started fighting amongst themselves. As a result of their

18. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

19. *Ibid.*

20. James Browne, *Introduction to the History of the Origin and Progress of Sikhs*, p. 16; reproduced in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, ed. Ganda Singh (Browne-Introduction, vii).

21. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

22. Qazi Nur Muhammad, *Jangnama* (1765), edited by Ganda Singh, Amritsar, 1939, pp. 5-6.



disputes and hostilities Ranjit Singh occupied their territories.<sup>23</sup> This is just a simplification of the mutual relations of the Sardars of the Misals.

The author writes that the Sikhs to start with indulged in robbery and plunder and later they became the masters of the Punjab. The author must know that the robbers cannot become the rulers unless they deliver goods to the people. He writes only what the Sikhs are capable of doing under very trying circumstances. He does not write as to how they were treated by the government. This is generally the weakness of the Muslim historiographers. When writing about the Sikhs they generally align themselves with the ruling class to which they belong in respect of their faith. There the estimate or evaluation of the rival people by the Muslim writers is blurred, and their impartiality of which they boast suffers a setback. The later writers or historians make those books as their source of information and blindly copy the same and place before the readers a wrong picture of the Sikhs and their activities. The Sikhs were the sons of the soil. They had to live in the Punjab. Emperor Bahadur Shah issued an order on December 10, 1710, for the wholesale genocide of the Sikhs—the worshippers of Nanak, wherever found.<sup>24</sup> Under such repressive and tyrannical measures of the government the Sikhs were compelled to leave their homes and hearths and find asylum in inhospitable forests and hills. For their petty requirements they had come to their homes occupied by the Muslims. When they took away things from their own houses they were branded, most unjustifiably, the robbers and plunderers. But actually the new occupants of their houses were the real robbers and plunderers. This is the real position which the Muslim chroniclers refuse to understand and the unfortunate tragedy is that even some of the present day scholars close their eyes to see the actual situation prevailing in the land and only open their ears to listen to what the prejudiced and fanatic writers have to tell them.

Most of the writers have not been able to distinguish between a 'Sardar' and a 'Misaldar.' They use both these terms for the chief of a Misal. Bute Shah makes the distinction between the two. He writes, "When a person accompanied by some comrades takes possession of a particular territory he gives away some portions of that territory to his companions for their support. He himself becomes the Sardar (Chief) of the Misal and the others become his Misaldars. When the

23. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

24. *Akhbar-i-Durbar-i-Mualla*, MS., G.S. entry December 10, 1710.

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Sardar distributed some villages amongst his companions upto individual horsemen these grantees were called *pattidars* and their tenures as *pattis*.<sup>25</sup>

The Misaldars were without any condition of dependence except military help against an enemy. If the Misaldar was dissatisfied with the Sardar he could transfer himself along with his lands to some other chief. The *pattidars* could not dispose of his tenure to a stranger but in an emergency he was allowed to mortgage it. At the time of his death he could give away his *patti* to any of his male relations. Thus, the *patti* became hereditary. The only condition of his tenure in relation to the Sardar of the Misal was the military aid when required.

According to Bute Shah, Misal is a territory conquered by a brave Sardar with the help of his comrades and placed under his protection or charge.<sup>26</sup> This definition of the Misal is not correct. Misal is and has been used to mean loose papers tagged or stitched together forming a sort of a file. When the Sikh Sardars assembled at Akal Takhat they made a detailed report of the territories occupied by them to their chief leader—the president of the assembly who prepared the separate Misals (files) of the individual Sardars. These records of Misals helped resolve territorial disputes whenever they arose between the two Sardars. In a general way this interpretation of the term is borne out by Cunningham also. He writes that 'Misal more-over means in India, a file of papers or indeed anything carried or placed in ranks.'<sup>27</sup>

In the beginning, the chiefship of a Misal was not considered as the hereditary property of a particular Sardar. This belief led to giving preference to suitability over hereditary claims and caste distinctions. In the early stages, this practice was not resented by the progeny of any Sardar. According to Bute Shah, the chiefship of Bhangi Misal did not remain in the family of its founder Chajja Singh but went over to his companion Bhoma Singh and after Bhoma Singh one of his brave and wise companions, Hari Singh, was appointed as the chief. After the death of Gurbakhsh Singh—one of the Misaldars of Bhoma Singh, the former's nephew Gujjar Singh was ignored in favour of Lehna Singh Kahlon who was an officer in the contingent of that Misaldar.<sup>28</sup> And also the succession to the leadership of the

25. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 96 f.n. 1.

28. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

Karorasinghia Misal was another instance of this practice in the early stage of the process of development of Misal system. The founder, Sham Singh, was succeeded by his nephew, Karam Singh who left his authority to Karora Singh, a petty personal follower who again bequeathed the command to Baghel Singh, his own menial servant.<sup>29</sup>

All the Sikhs in the Misal considered it their privilege to elect a leader of the Misal. Thus, we find that in the panthic interest, the Sikhs in the early stages did not attach any importance to the principle of hereditary succession. Only the personal qualities were the main criteria for the selection or election of a successor. That these elections were not always nominal is shown by the fact that many times the heir-apparent was set aside and some really very capable person was elected from among the descendants or relations of the deceased chief, and sometimes even from among the troops themselves. With the passage of time, the chiefship became hereditary.

Bute Shah is always conscious of Sikh leaders taking *pahul* (*amrit*) at the hands of prominent religious leaders of the community. To take *amrit* (baptism of the double-edged sword) and become a member of the Khalsa was required of every Sikh. He who was not duly baptised could not be elected as their leader. They all had to adopt the *rahit* (code of conduct) of the Khalsa and abide by it. According to Bute Shah, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was baptised by Nawab Kapur Singh.<sup>30</sup> Tara Singh Ghaiba took *pahul* from Gurdial Singh, Khatri of Malanh Sub-caste, who lived at Dallewal.<sup>31</sup> Sham Singh, founder of the Karorasinghia Misal took *pahul* from Nawab Kapur Singh.<sup>32</sup> According to Bute Shah, Chhajja Singh, the founder of Bhangi Misal, was the first to take *pahul* from Banda Singh. After the death of Banda Singh, Chhajja Singh administered *pahul* to Bhima Singh, Nath Singh and Jagat Singh and made them his companions.<sup>33</sup> Bute Shah understands that *pahul* was the precondition for every Sikh to entry any *jatha*, or a *derah*. Charhat Singh's essential condition, for recruitment to his contingent was that the incumbent must be a duly baptised 'Singh.' Those who were not already initiated into Sikhism with the baptism of the double-edged sword received the *amrit* from his hands before joining his rank.<sup>34</sup>

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 216-18.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-65.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

34. *Ibid.*, V, pp. 2-3.

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"Kapur Singh converted a large number of people jats, carpenters, weavers, *jhiwars*, *chhatris* and others to the persuasion of Guru Gobind Singh and the religious respect in which he was held was so great that initiation into *pahul* of the Guru with his hands was considered a great distinction."<sup>35</sup> Besides so many others mentioned above Jai Singh Kanaihya also took *pahul* at the hands of Kapur Singh. The Sikhs used to pride themselves on having been baptised by such a revered and indisputed leader of the Sikh community as Kapur Singh was. He gave *pahul* to thousands of people belonging to different communities and high and low social groups.<sup>36</sup>

Under the influence of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the Sikhs had disregarded the caste distinctions, differences of high and low, untouchability, etc. In the matter of origin growth and development of the Misals the castes had no place. No Misal was named after any caste or sub-caste of any chief or Misaldar. Whether the leaders of the Misals originality belonged to the peasant, carpenter or any other profession, it was immaterial with the Sikhs. The leader should be a member of the Khalsa. The *amrit* or the Sikh baptism had elevated them all to the same level and made them members of the same casteless Khalsa fraternity.

The founders of most of the Misals came from the times of Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Singh Bahadur. "Chajja Singh the founder of the Bhangi Misal was the companion of Banda Singh and had fought in the latter's army."<sup>37</sup> Kapur Singh Faizullapuria was the companion of Banda Singh in his early days. Tiloka and Rama of the Phulkian house, were the followers of Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Singh. Khushal Singh, founder of Ramgarhia Misal, was the companion of Banda Singh, Hardas Singh, the grandfather of Jassa Singh Ramgarhia took *pahul* from the hands of Guru Gobind Singh. Thus, we can trace the ancestors of most of the Misals having intimate relations with Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Singh Bahadur.

Generally the chiefs leaders of the Misals occupied territories independent of one another. For example, of the Bhangis, Hari Singh was the first to start *mulk-giri*<sup>38</sup> or occupation of territories. According to Bute Shah, by the time of Hari Singh's succession to chiefship of the Misal Natha Singh and Jagat Singh, the close associates of his predecessors had died. He appointed Jhanda Singh in place of Natha

35. Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, Calcutta, 1891, pp. 322-23.

36. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, IV.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

Singh and Ganda Singh in place of Jagat Singh who made great contributions to his achievements. Hari Singh fought a number of times against Ahmad Shah Durrani.<sup>39</sup>

According to Bute Shah, Nawab Kapur Singh's successor Khushal Singh started *mulk-giri* immediately after his succession to the Sardari of the Misal. First, he occupied the territories adjoining Faizullapur. Later he conquered the city of Jalandhar in the Doab and exacted tribute from the *zamindars* like Rai Ibrahim. He occupied some territories in the cis-Satluj areas also. He confronted Ahmad Shah Abdali in collaboration with Hari Singh Bhangi. He constructed a Faizullapurian's Katra at Amritsar.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, it is legitimate to infer that the territories were occupied largely on the Misal basis. We can cite many more examples to this effect. But let us take one more example to this effect. Charhat Singh Sukarchakia to start with, was in the Bhangi *dal* but soon thereafter he began to nurse in his heart political ambition (*bu-i-riyast*) and came out of the Bhangi contingent and declared himself as holding an independent status.<sup>41</sup> In a short time he collected about 100 followers and the number of his men began to grow rapidly and soon he had at his command 400 horse and foot.<sup>42</sup> He placed the tracts of Rohtas, Dhani and salt mines under his *rakhi* (protection) and received the due revenue of protection money from them.<sup>43</sup>

This is not to suggest that there was no cooperation between the leaders of one Misal and another during the phase of territorial occupation. In fact, Bute Shah clearly states that sometimes territories were occupied jointly by members of two or more Misals. The Bhangi chiefs Lehna Singh and Gujjar Singh and Kanaihya Sardar Sebha Singh, nephew (brother's son) of Jai Singh Kanaihya took charge of Lahore in April 1765. The three chiefs divided Lahore amongst them.<sup>44</sup> The Kanaihyas and the Ramgarhias who occupied Batala, divided its revenue equally amongst themselves. They had also jointly attacked Kasur. During their joint attack of Kasur they got huge amount of booty. Mali Singh, brother of Jassa Singh, was

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39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

41. Ganesh Das Bادهرا, *Char Bagh-i-Punjab* (1855), Amritsar, 1965, p. 135.

42. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, V, pp. 2-3.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

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alleged to have concealed a valuable part of the booty against Jassa Singh's wishes. When this fact was discovered later the friendship between the Ramgarhia and Kanaihya chiefs came to end.

In the second quarter of the eighteenth century a aim of the Singhs had been to paralyse the government administration and in the third quarter it was to establish their own government. And to this end the whole Sikh struggle in the second quarter was directed. The Sikhs emerged victorious and they established their own sovereign principalities. In the Sikh war for their liberation and ultimately their successes, the qualities of leadership came to be prized more than ever before. By their joint actions their striking power increased considerably. From the overall study of Bute Shah's work we find him giving due place and regards to the Sikh leadership that emerged in the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century. The Sikh movement produced a galaxy of valiant and competent Sikh leaders. Nawab Kapur Singh led the community through very difficult times. He was, undoubtedly, the most distinguished of the Sikh leaders before to days of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Ala Singh of Patiala. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, who was a man of great ability, was much respected by the Sikhs. He was a great warrior, a brave general and a splendid organiser. Jassa Singh remained the undisputed leader of the Sikh community till his death in 1783. Then, there was Ala Singh, who was, in diplomacy, par excellence. He plundered Ahmad Shah Durrani's foraging parties in 1748, robbed his son Timur Shah in 1757, and annoyed the Durrani in 1760, by supplying grains to the Marathas. In 1764, he joined the Dal Khalsa in attacking Sirhind and killing its governor Zain Khan. Despite all this he obtained the title of 'Raja' and governorship of Sirhind from the Durrani. Ala Singh had pleased the Mughal Emperor, the Durrani invader, and the Dal Khalsa. He may rightly be called the Bismarck of the Sikhs. He had three balls in his hands and by throwing them simultaneously into the air, he always caught them, never allowing any one to fall.

We have a big list of equally eminent leaders who included Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Charhat Singh Sukarchakia, Lehna Singh and Gujjar Singh Bhangis, Jai Singh Kanaihya, Tara Singh Ghaiba and Baghel Singh. These leaders made a notable contribution to wresting power from the hands of the Mughals and foiling all attempts of Ahmad Shah Durrani to make Punjab a province of his kingdom.

The above Sardars were very powerful leaders of their respective Misals. They would naturally expect their Misaldars to continue acknowledging their superior status. Thus defection of a Misaldar

from one Misal to another against the wishes of the chiefs was not liked or encouraged by him. Sometimes, this sort of defection led to hostilities between two Misals. For example, Jhanda Singh Bhangi had bestowed Pathankot on one of his Misaldars, Nand Singh, also called Mansa Singh whose widow gave her daughter and jagir of Pathankot to Tara Singh, a near relation of Haqiqat Singh Kanaihya. Ganda Singh was inimical to the Kanaihyas for their nefarious act of arranging the murder of his brother Jhanda Singh. He was severely annoyed over both the acts of Nand Singh's widow. Ganda Singh Bhangi insisted that Tara Singh should give up the *jagir* but he refused. There was a fight between the Bhangis and Kanaihyas and during the armed operation Ganda Singh fell ill and died.<sup>45</sup> The Bhangis withdrew and it further strengthened the position of the Kanaihyas. It cannot be definitely said whether the rights claimed by the chief over his Misaldars were justified by the original terms of the association.

It cannot be suggested that the Sardar of the Misal exercised any strict control over his Misaldars. Their obligation seems to have been limited to cooperation with the Sardars of the Misal only in those situations which called for armed offence or defence. For the rest they were virtually independent of the Sardar. They exercised full authority in the territory under their control of their own behalf. In the very real sense the Misaldar was as autonomous as the chief. The principle of hereditary succession which came to be established in all the Misals was adopted as much by the Misaldars as by the chiefs of the Misals themselves. Bute Shah has written accounts of a large number of Misaldars or associate chiefs or some others of influence. We can include in this category minor chiefs as Tara Singh Chaipuria, Bagh Singh Hallowalia, Sudh Singh Randhawa, Deva Singh Lundawala, Zamindars of Phagwara, Kapurthala, Nakodar, Kalerwala, Mehtapurias, Abdula Khan Hadiabadia, Rajab Ali of Alwalpur, Isa Khan and many others whose accounts have been given by Bute Shah in his *Tawarikh*. We find that for all practical purposes the qualitative difference between the chief of the Misal and the Misaldar was first minimized and other obliterated. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century there were strictly speaking no chiefs and Misaldars but only so many Sardars of major or minor consequence. During this time we find that a Sardar of one Misal fighting against the Sardar of another Misal and the Sardars of some Misals fighting against the Sardars of some other Misals. We

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45. *Ibid.*, IV, p. 40.

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find many examples in Bute Shah's work. For instance Sukarchakias fighting against Kanaihyas, Kanaihyas fighting against Ramgarhias, Sukarchakias fighting against Ramgarhias, Ahluwalias fighting against Ramgarhias, Bhangis fighting against Kanaihyas, Sukarchakias fighting against Bhangis, Sukarchakias fighting against Dallewalias, Sukarchakias fighting against Nakkais, and so on. Sometimes the opposing Sardars forming alliances with non-Sikh chiefs. All this characterize the eighteenth century or early nineteenth Sikh polity. Within their own territories the administration of the Sardars, as a rule, far from being oppressive and as told by Bute Shah, was magnanimous with perfect religious toleration and people living in peace and plenty under their rule.<sup>46</sup> Bute Shah does not refer to any Sardar being discriminatory or oppressive and prejudiced against the non-Sikhs. The Sikh leaders fought against the oppressive policies and religious discrimination of the Mughal Government so long and when they emerged successful they would not do any thing of that sort which they as victims of repressive government suffered for decades after decades. What they had wanted of the Mughal Government must be given when they are in the saddle of administration.

The most important part of Bute Shah's works. I believe, is daftar II which extensively deals with the Sikh Misals and their polity about which not much had been said earlier. Daftar V is, no doubt, more exhaustive and detailed but it has not to inform us much beyond what Sohan Lal Suri had said in his *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*.

The Misals passed through two distinct phases as we have been above, the non-territorial and territorial phases. During the first or non-territorial phase there were voluntary associations of the Singhs irrespective of their local or family affiliations, with a leader chosen for his recognised merit and willingly followed. In the second phase we notice the growing political aims of the Sardars which led them to the occupation of territories largely on the Misal basis which, in due course, transformed the character of the Misal. The Misaldars became autonomous Sardars and the relations earlier established between the Sardar and the Misaldar vanished almost completely towards the close of the eighteenth century. This change had been clearly noticed by Bute Shah and writes about the Misaldars is full consciousness of the situation.

Daftar V forms about one half of the whole book and contains a detailed history of the rise, growth and consolidation of Ranjit Singh's power in the Punjab and the neighbouring territories. The

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46. *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 97-98.



author has not revealed his sources of information but it may be inferred that part of it, particularly later, was contemporary. The author may have had access to the British records, especially as he wrote the work at the instance of British Political Agent at Ludhiana. Bute Shah's account of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was found to be fairly reliable by such authorities on the period as Captain Murray and Wade, who had personal recollection of the events.

Bute Shah's account of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Daftar V corresponds so closely with that of Sohan Lal (Daftars II and III of *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*) critically. Both the narratives, after the usual introduction begin with Budha Singh, the great grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The same narrative order is followed by both, but the account given by Bute Shah is very brief. The resemblance in text and substance between the two histories is so close that one is led to believe that Bute Shah's *Tawarikh-i-Punjab* is no more than an intelligent and faithful summary of Sohan Lal's *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*. At places even the text of the *Tawarikh-i-Punjab* is substantially the same as that of *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*.

The two narratives vary in many respects. Sohan Lal, as a court chronicler, has been very tactful in describing the early career of the Maharaja, and his ancestors, but Bute Shah while narrating the same facts has used less guarded language. For example, while speaking of the activities of Charhat Singh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's grandfather, Sohan Lal Suri records that :

"On the death of his father he (Charat Singh) assumed the leadership of the clan and on account of his impetuous nature, often stayed in inaccessible forests."<sup>47</sup>

But Bute Shah bluntly states that : "Charhat Singh, on assumption of the leadership of the clan at the age of 20, resorted, like other Sikhs, to the profession of free booking and plundering. He took his abode in wilderness and jungle."<sup>48</sup>

Sohan Lal, being an eye witness, is lawish of detail. The ceremonial exchange of presents, etc., narrated in details have unnecessarily swelled his accounts. His narrative obviously bears the stamp of a diary. In contrast with the official account. Bute Shah has only recorded the salient events, omits details of secondary importance or of little historical value and relates the events in a connected historical manner. With regard to the visit of Captain Wade to

47. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 4-5.

48. Bute Shah, *op. cit.*, V, p. 2.

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Lahore in 1828 Bute Shah described the meeting between the Maharaja and the Captaln in one passage. On the other hand Sohan Lal has mentioned the meeting in details. Bute Shah, probably because of his closer contact with the British functionaries at Ludhiana, also uses English names more frequently and more correctly and has invariably given the Christian years, and sometimes month and dates corresponding to those of the current Vikrama era.

Thus, the *Tawarikh-i-Punjab* adds little to the voluminous account given in the *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, yet as a continuous review of the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by a writer who was partially contemporary, it may not only serve as a check on the official Sikh record, but also help from British sources to corroborate many an important point.

# Problem of Sikh Separate Identity : A Study of Hindu Reaction of the Early Twentieth Century in Hindi Writings\*

DR HIMADRI BANERJEE\*\*

A persistent quest for a separate religious identity perhaps represents one of the major trends of the history of the Sikhs of the early decades of the present century. The Singh Sabha tradition of the late nineteenth century highlighting the Khalsa Panth continued to be focussed during these days. Similarly, Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha's much publicised monograph *Ham Hindu Nahin* (1897), which offered the Sikhs a distinctiveness of their own, was then more effectively utilised by the Chief Khalsa Diwan not only as a battle cry, but a powerful device in consolidating their grip over the community. In their various pamphlet duels with the Arya Samajists, Punjab Hindu Sabha and other similar organisations, the Sikh case was powerfully advocated by a band of devoted scholars, theologians and journalists like Bhai Ditt Singh, Bhai Takht Singh, Babu Teja Singh and others who elaborated the Khalsa tradition on a broader ideological perspective. Generally speaking, the Panthic ideological duel also carried with it the spirit of contemporary politics of Punjab. Consequently, the enactment of the Anand Marriage Act of 1909, introduction of a sparate franchise under the Montagu-Chelmsford constitutional framework and above all, the Government of India's persistent bid for the definition of a Sikh made the political scenario and 'disquieting' in the first quarter of the present century.

Hindus of Punjab and even beyond also did not fail to react sharply to the Sikh bid for a separate identity. They had perhaps very little support and sympathy for the Sikh demand because it was likely to affect them directly in their day to day life. The reaction of the Hindus, who demographically constituted the most dominant

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\*It goes without saying that the author is himself responsible for the views expressed in the paper.

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religious community on the Indo-Gangetic plains, was generally of a varied and complex pattern. Here an attempt has been made to point out how a section of Hindu intellectuals beyond Punjab had been trying to negotiate this Sikh claim during these days. For the convenience of our discussion, we have confined ourselves to a few publications of the *Nagri Pracharini Sabha*, Benaras, which would provide an index of Hindu articulation in Hindi heart-land of these days.

### I

Since its inception in 1893, the *Nagri Pracharini Sabha* has been playing a pioneering role for the development of Hindi language and literature. Its early success and failure was intimately associated with Babu Shyam Sunder Das (1875-1937),<sup>1</sup> the first professor of Hindi at the Banaras Hindu University. Under his general editorship, Das initiated the publication of the *Manoranjan Pustakmala* series highlighting primarily the history and religion of India in a popular style written by different well-known personalities of the contemporary Hindi world. Das had to initiate the project under an extremely bleak financial condition. Later on, the series, however, gradually brought some material benefit and literary prestige to the *Sabha*. Nearly fifty titles were brought out in the series,<sup>2</sup> out of which at least three were wholly devoted to the history of the Sikhs, while in the fourth one, a brief section had dealt with it. All these studies were more or less published within a span of five or six years, and written by three different persons of different regions of modern Uttar Pradesh and they also represent a few common but distinct trends of opinion about the Panth.

It goes to the credit of Beni Prasad<sup>3</sup> of bringing out the first monograph on Sikh studies in the *Manoranjan Pustakmala* series. It was a biography of Guru Gobind Singh published in 1914.<sup>4</sup> Drafted in a popular and emotional style, the author is completely silent about his source materials. Beni Prasad belonged to a Kyastha family

1. Shyam Sunder Das, *Meri Atamkahani*, Prayag, 1941. See also Peter Galffee, *A History of Indian Literature*, Volume VIII, Wiesbaden, 1978, p. 19.
2. Ramnath Pandey, *Babu Shyamsundar Das: Vyakti Aur Krititva*, Varanashi, 1961, pp. 8 and 73.
3. For Beni Prasad's brief life-sketch, see Shushila Tyagi's unpublished contribution to be published in the *DNB* by the Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta. I am indebted to Professor N.R. Ray for allowing me to consult the article. But the Library Congress Catalogue differs greatly from Tyagi's observations regarding Beni Prasad's writings.
4. Beni Prasad, *Guru Gobind Singh*, Kashi, 1914. For its brief review, see *Masik Manoranjan*, Baisakh 1978 Samvat, p. 25.

of Agra and had already made his mark as a biographer of the Sikh gurus, serialised nearly a decade ago in the *Saraswati* of Allahabad.<sup>5</sup> The author also wrote a biography of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the same series in 1919.<sup>6</sup>

These two studies of Beni Prasad had some common distinctive features of their own. Apparently, they do not carry any impression of the biographer's awareness of the contemporary Sikh reform movement as well as its fight for a separate identity from that of the Hindus. It seems likely that the author's silence about the contemporary developments in Punjab was deliberate, because some of issues of the *Saraswati* had already drawn our attention to the situation prevailing across the Jamuna. Beni Prasad's long-standing association with the *Saraswati*<sup>7</sup> adds strength to this hypothesis. Without directly opposing the contemporary Sikh sentiment, he tried to put up a thesis by portraying the Panth as an integral part of the vast Hindu society. He often becomes extremely enthusiastic and grows lyrical in depicting the Tenth Guru and the Sikh monarch as the two great representatives of martial tradition of the pre-modern times, fighting for the defence of Hinduism in different theatres of war. They were admired for restoring the lost Hindu political glory. Prasad praised them for providing the Hindus once again a respectable place in Indian national life.

Prasad, a scion of the Kyastha family, particularly hailed the Guru's bold decision of bringing an end to caste system at the time of the creation of the Khalsa. He was of the opinion that the institution of the Khalsa represented the organisational genius of the Tenth Guru. He argues that Maharaja Ranjit Singh's monarchy was basically a state, governed in accordance with laws of administration and the Sikh ruler was never forgetful of his duties as a head of the state. In contrast to the contemporary Tat Khalsa assertion that there had long been in existence a separate code of Sikh rituals, the biographer writes that the Panth was universally guided by certain well-known code of ethics and social relationship. He also gives us the impression that Ranjit Singh had always been guided by some distinct rituals for auspicious occasions like coronation and marriage. He (Ranjit Singh) often used to take holy dips at places like Hardwar and

5. The biographies of the different Sikh gurus were published in the *Saraswati* during the period October 1902 to December 1907.

6. Beni Prasad, *Ranjit Singh*, Kashi, 1919.

7. See Foot note 5.

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Thaneswar, considered to be sacred by the Hindus. In spite of his occasional visits to the Golden Temple, or reciting the *ardas* or distributing *karahparsad*, these did not suggest any significant deviation from any beliefs or tenets.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the Sikh crownhead always regarded himself a faithful sovereign till the end of his life.

In other words, the biographer's deliberate silence about the contemporary Sikh feelings in Punjab as well as his bold defence of the Sikhs as one of the integral part of society pleased the Hindus of Hindi heartland for whose consumption the *Manoranjan Pushtakmala* were brought out during the period under review. It provided them the message they were looking forward for resisting the Sikh claim for a separate communal identity. It perhaps offered an interesting key to the understanding of the contemporary Hindu mind, which tried to resist some of the fundamental aspirations of the minority communities of the sub-continent.

## II

Another significant study on the history of the Sikhs in this series was the *Sikhon Ka Utthan Aur Patan*<sup>9</sup> authored by Nandkumardev Sharma of Mathura.<sup>10</sup> It is a general account of the Panth from its birth under Guru Nanak till the collapse of the Khalsa Raj at the end of the Second Sikh War in 1849. Unlike Prasad, Sharma provided a list of works in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and even Bengali utilised in reconstructing nearly 400 years long history of the Sikhs. Besides, he sought to avoid Prasad's popular emotional literary style as far as practicable and extensively used footnotes citing his sources either elaborating or defending his line of argument which one would not come across in the former's volume. Further, Sharma was fortunate in having some direct association with the contemporary Punjab politics; he made no secret of his anxiety about the Sikh identity movement and he directly referred to it at the very outset of his study which was conspicuous by its absence in the pages of Prasad's works.

Actually, the early twentieth century developments in the Panthic politics, left behind a deep impact on the mind of the author. He was of the opinion that this was likely to have many repercussions on the

8. Beni Prasad, *op. cit.*, pp 18, 19, 51, 63, 67, 69, 70, 163, 177, 179 and 217.

9. Nandkumardev Sharma, *Shikhon ka Utthan Aur Patan*, Kashi, 1915.

10. For a detailed analysis on Nandkumardev Sharma's writings, see the author's unpublished paper 'Regional History in Hindi Writing : Nandkumardev Sharma's Writings on the Sikhs' presented in a seminar organised by the Kurukshetra University, February 1991.

national life of the Indian sub-continent, especially when the Indians were fighting against the British Raj. While praising the Sikhs in general for their bravery and heroic tradition, he cautioned their leaders of the implications of their demands.

While elaborating these findings in his general framework of history, the historian makes no pretension that Sikhism was ever a separate religion from that of Hinduism and therefore Guru Nanak was born to reform the Hindus from within. Like Beni Prasad, Sharma concluded that Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a Indian hero who gave a distinct shape to Sikh political destiny. But as soon as the strong hands of the Maharaja were removed, there began a period of disastrous civil war and anarchy among the leading members of the royal household. But the Khalsa remained united and loyal till the end of the Sikh Kingdom (1849). In spite of their heroic defence under their 'true' leaders like Sham Singh Attariwala, they proved themselves to be no match for their 'greedy, selfish and treacherous' generals, namely, Lal Singh and Tej Singh who surrendered Sikh sovereignty to the British. Hence, he cautioned the Sikhs of the evil designs of their contemporary leadership. Such 'unfortunate' development had always been present in the fabric of Hindu society. They had often brought disasters whenever the Hindus had tried to be united in resisting the foreigners. Consequently, he warned his readers of its manifold consequences in the national movement against the Britishers carried in the early decades of the present century. It is needless to say that Sharma's anxiety was widely shared by many Hindus of northern India and, therefore, his volume was reprinted on more than three occasions within thirty years of its first publication.<sup>11</sup>

### III

Unlike three earlier works, the fourth one, entitled the *Manohar Itihasik Kahaniya*<sup>12</sup> (*Popular Historical Tales*) was a collection of sixteen heroic tales from Indian history, three of which dealt with that of the Sikhs. The first one primarily dwells on Guru Gobind Singh's life-long struggle against the Mughals leading to the birth of the Khalsa. According to its author, the Khalsa provided a spirit of unity and sacrifice among the Sikhs that had been enshrined in the Sikh resistance movement after the demise of the Guru. The author had no doubt that heroes like Banda Bahadur, Bhai Mani Singh and

11. Incidentally, Sharma's *Shikhon ka Utthan Aur Pattan* was reprinted for at least three times and I have consulted the first and fourth reprints of it.

12. Dwarkaprasad Sharma Chaturvedi, *Manohar Atihasik Kahaniya*, Kashi 1922.

### PROBLEM OF SIKH SEPARATE IDENTITY

Hakikat Rai inherited this tradition and their martyrdom for the defence of the Panth kept the Sikh flag flying against the relentless oppression of the Mughal power. Incidentally, these developments of the post-guru decades constituted the central theme of the other two stories dealing with the history of the Sikhs included in the volume.

Chaturvedi Dwarkaprasad Sharma, its author, was not, however, a professional historian. A Prayag (Allahabad) based prolific writer of biographies, Chaturvedi was widely known for his commitment to the cause of Hindi literature. A deep fascination and love about Rajput chivalry and heroism brought him to the arena of history. Perhaps, he discovered the Sikhs while documenting Rajput military tradition of the medieval days. In his scheme of history, therefore, the fighting role of Guru Gobind Singh as well as the sacrifice and martyrdom of his associates and disciples were represented as a connected story of native resistance against the Mughals in the eighteenth century. Dwarkaprasad also gave us a glimpse of the sources utilised by him in reconstructing the history of the Panth. He had, for example, been associated with the works of Cunningham, G.C. Narang and Elphinstone, though he had mainly referred to Elphinstone in the footnotes.

A brief reference to Chaturvedi's attitude towards the contemporary Sikh movement for a separate identity may be quite relevant here. Like Beni Prasad and Nandkumardev Sharma, he was generally of the opinion that the Sikhs did not constitute a separate community which evidently is an ambiguous statement. Perhaps the contemporary Gurdwara gave a new dimension to Hindu-Sikh relationship in the late 1920s.



## Legacy of Dyal Singh Majithia

MADAN GOPAL\*

While the scions of other families of the Sikh chiefs at Maharaja Ranjit Singh's court accepted, after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849, such jobs as E.A.C., or tehsildars, and, with the income from *jagirs*, lived a life of luxury and indulgence, Lehna Singh Majithia's only son Dyal Singh grew into a shrewd businessman dealing in real estate and precious stone and jewellery. He made lots of money. The prestigious Dyal Singh Mansion on Mall Road of Lahore, with 154 residential units, the 'Exchange' building later bought over by the Ganga Ram Trust, the 50 odd lawyers chambers on Fane Road in Lahore are only three of the 25 properties left behind by him there in addition to one in Karachi, besides lands, gardens, houses and villages in Amritsar, Lahore and Gurdaspur districts, shares in joint stock companies and in the Punjab National Bank. According to one estimate his assets at the time of his death in 1898 were worth Rs. 30 lakhs.

Dyal Singh had been keeping indifferent health. Elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress in 1893, he was ill and, although he insisted on receiving the delegates, he could not read his address and asked Harkishen Lal to read it on his behalf. Two years later in 1895, he drew up a Will, reportedly with the assistance of the great Brahmo Samaj leader, Rev. Brother Pratap Chunder Mazumdar, who had come to Lahore and stayed as the Sirdar's guest in the "barracks" on Nisbet Road. It was a meticulously drawn up Will. After getting two European officials to witness his signature on the Will, he got it registered with the Registrar at Lahore. The existence of the Will was kept a secret. Only his friend Ruchi Ram Sahni and his lawyer Sangam Lal were informed about it. It is a remarkable document,<sup>1</sup> worth reproduction :

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\*B 2/17, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi.

1. The Will of Dyal Singh Majithia has been printed by the Tribune press. The copy reproduced here was supplied by the Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta. The Government Dyal Singh College, Lahore, and the Dyal Singh Trust Library did not till recently have the will's copy.

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJEETHIA

### Will of the Late Sirdar Dyal Singh Majeethia

The last will and testament of me, Sirdar Dyal Singh Majeethia, son of late Sirdar Lehna Singh Majeethia, *rais*, jagirdar and land and house proprietor of Lahore, provides as follows :

I. That all my just debts and liabilities, if any, including pay of establishment, servants, wages and other similar charges due at the time of my death, shall be paid out of funds with my cashier at Amritsar, named Bhanga Singh, and, in the event of those funds not sufficing, out of the current deposits held in my account in the Bank of Bengal, Lahore.

II. That as I have no issue of my body and have not adopted any son and as Sirdar Gajindar Singh, son of the late Sirdar Ranjodh Singh of Majeetha, is my nearest male agnatic relation, I bequeath to the said Sirdar Gajinder Singh, all my immovable and movable property mentioned here in below, that is to say :

- (a) All my lands, houses and gardens in Majeetha, in the Amritsar District.
- (b) The whole villages of Gallowali in the District to Amritsar.
- (c) All my lands, houses and gardens in the city of Amritsar that may be in my possession at the time of my death.
- (d) All my jewellery at Amritsar kept in a sealed box in the custody of my cashier Bhanga Singh.
- (e) All plates and other articles of silver locked in an iron safe in the *zenana* house at Amritsar.
- (f) All my houses, carriages and other conveyances and cattle and all other articles of domestic use save such as may be in my wife's possession for her personal use.
- (g) Any cash balance that may be left with my above named cashier at Amritsar after paying my just debts and liabilities, if any as provided in paragraph I, hereof.

III. That the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh shall be entitled to the immediate possession of the property mentioned above on my death and shall take in it a permanent heritable interest but neither he nor his heirs and representatives shall have any claim or right to or interest in any other of my property not hereby expressly bequeathed to him.

IV. That the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh, his heirs and representatives shall, in lieu of the above bequest to him, be bound to maintain my wife Bhagwan Kaur for her lifetime in a manner suitable to her rank and condition in life, showing her every respect, attending to all her comforts, supplying her with cattle for milk and such conveyances as he may be in possession of for customary visits to relations and

other occasions of festivities and sorrow, allowing her a suitable residence at Amritsar or Majeetha as she may desire and paying her for her personal expenses a monthly allowances at commencement of each month at the rate of Rs. 10 0/- per month. The said Sirdar Gajindar Singh, his heirs and representatives shall, moreover, be bound to provide fodder for the cattle supplied for the use of my said wife, and to pay wages to two female and two male servants who may attend upon and serve my said wife.

V. That, save as provided in paragraph IV here in above my said wife shall have no other right or claim to or interest in my estate, but she shall be entitled to all her property in her possession.

VI. That the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh, his heirs and representatives shall continue Nur Muhammad in the management of the landed property bequeathed to the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh in paragraph II, hereof which property the said Nur Muhammad has been managing efficiently for the last twelve years save in the case of proved dishonesty or gross neglect of duty on the part of the said Nur Muhammad.

VII. That as I am childless and have not made any adoption, it is my desire that my *jagirs* in perpetuality situate in the Districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur should be continued to the aforesaid Sirdar Gajindar Singh who, being my first cousin on the paternal side, may be considered rightfully entitled to the said *jagirs*, but whether the said *jagirs* be continued to the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh or not, the said Sirdar Gajindar Singh, his heirs and representatives shall be bound to comply with all the provisions of paragraph IV. here in before regarding the treatment and maintenance, so, of my said wife as therein laid down with the exception that if the *jagirs* be not continued to the said Sirdar Gajinder Singh and any pension by reason thereof be granted by the Government to my said wife the said Sirdar Gajinder Singh may take the pension that may be granted to her into account in respect of making her for her personal expenses the monthly allowance of Rs. 100/- provided in the said paragraph.

VIII. That all the property immovable and movable mentioned here in below shall vest permanently in a Committee of Trustees for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a first class Arts College at Lahore, that is to say,

(a) All my proprietary rights including accessory and other rights and lands, gardens and houses in the following villages in the District of Amritsar, viz.

1. Dayalpore
2. Burj (Nawabad)

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

3. Ruk Bhagwan
  4. Putti
  5. Bhala Pind
- (b) All my proprietary rights including accessory and other rights and lands, houses and gardens in the village of Mirza Jan in the District of Gurdaspur.
  - (c) All my houses and lands in Lahore and its suburbs excepting the house called the "Exchange" now occupied by Messrs. E. Gilon & Co., limited.
  - (d) My house property in the city of Karachi, Sind.
  - (e) Any other land or house that may hereafter be acquired by me in Lahore, Karachi or any other place.
  - (f) The eighty shares belonging to me and standing in my name in the Delhi Cotton Mills Company, limited and the forty shares belonging to me and standing in my name in the Krishna Mills Company limited, Delhi.
  - (g) All my shares in the Punjab National Bank, Lahore.
  - (h) All current and fixed deposits to my credit in the Alliance Bank of Simla, Lahore, in the Agra Bank, Lahore, in the Bank of Bengal at Lahore and Calcutta and with Messrs. Latham & Co. of Karachi save as provided in paragraphs I, XVI, and XXV hereof.
  - (i) All sums of money due to me on Promissory Notes, Bonds, Hundies and Cheques.
  - (j) Two gold necklaces set with pearls, rubies and diamonds, now in the custody of my cashier, Bhanga Singh at Amritsar.
  - (k) Furnitures, books and bookshelves at my residential house at Lahore and books and bookshelves at my residential house at Amritsar.

IX. That the said Committee of Trustees shall consist of the following members, viz.

1. Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose, M.A., B.L., Pleader, Chief Court, Lahore.
2. Babu Sasi Bhusan Mukherjee, M.A., B.L., Professor, Government College, Lahore.
3. Dewan Narindra Nath, M.A., District Magistrate, Montgomery.
4. Mr. Charles Golok Nath, B.A., LL.B., Barrister-at-Law, Lahore.
5. Mr. Harikishan Lal, B.A. Barrister-at-Law, Lahore.
6. Lala Ruchi Ram, M.A., Assistant Professor, Government College, Lahore.
7. Mr. Golok Nath Chatterjee, B.A., Assistant Professor,

Government College, Lahore.

8. Lala Sundar Das Suri, M.A., Assistant Superintendent, Training College, Lahore.
9. Babu Adinash Chandra Majumdar of the North Western Railway office, Lahore.

X. That it shall be the duty of the said committee of Trustees to establish and maintain out of the funds and income of the property mentioned in paragraph VIII, hereof a first class Arts College with or without any school classes as to the said Committee may decide for the speed and dissemination of a sound liberal education in this province in which College every attempt shall be made to inculcate pure morality and the principle of Theism consistent with the tenets of the Brahmo religion by the personal example of the teaching staff as far as possible and by instituting a course of lectures and by such other similar means as may to the said committee appear proper and feasible.

XI. That, save as above provided, the said college shall in all other respect be a thoroughly efficient non-denominational college affiliated to the Universities of Calcutta and the Punjab teaching up to the highest standards and imparting instruction on the same lines generally as in the Government college in this country and looking after and promoting the physical, mental and moral well-being of the pupils on its rolls.

XII. That the control and management of the said college shall vest entirely with the said Committee of Trustees who shall be competent to frame all rules and regulations and do all other things necessary to ensure the sound working and the permanency of the said college.

XIII. That the said Committee of Trustees shall attach suitable Boarding House to the said college, where students may board subject to such rules and conditions as the said committee may frame and lay down.

XIV. That the said Committee of Trustees shall cause to be erected out of the funds placed at their disposal in paragraph VIII suitable buildings for the said College and Boarding House with a Gymnasium and the requisite out-offices in some convenient locality close to the city of Lahore, and purchase such furniture, books, apparatus and other appliances out of the said funds as may serve all the purpose of the college and boarding house.

XV. That it shall be in the discretion of the said Committee of Trustees to dispose of any of the properties mentioned in paragraph

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

VIII hereof and to invest the sale proceeds of the same and the funds placed at their disposal in the said paragraph VIII in such safe and profitable investment as to the said committee may seem fit and reasonable. It is my suggestion that the following houses which are not sufficiently productive may be so disposed of at the earliest convenient opportunity, viz. :

1. The house and premises No. 12, Victoria Street, Karachi, Sindh.
2. The house on the Empress Road, Lahore, formerly occupied by the Royal Victoria Hotel.
3. The house on the Nicholson Road, Lahore, purchased by me at auction in February 1893.
4. The house named respectively the "Beehive" and the "Lily Cottage" on the Empress Road, Lahore.
5. The house in Anarkali, Lahore, opposite to the Bible Society—Book Depot—near the old Museum building.

XVI. That the property herein mentioned, that is to say, be house in Lahore known as the "Exchange" now occupied by Messrs. E. Gillon Company Limited and rupees sixty thousand out of the deposits in the Banks mentioned in paragraph VIII. Class (b) hereinbefore shall vest permanently in a committee of Trustees consisting of the following members, viz. :

1. Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose, M.A., B.L. Pleader, Chief Court, Lahore.
2. Mr. Charles Golok Nath, B.A., LL.B. Barrister at-law, Lahore.
3. Mr. Harikishen Lal, B.A. Barrister-at-law, Lahore.
4. Lala Shib Dayal, M.A. of the Aitchison College, Lahore.
5. Lala Sunder Dass, M.A., Assistant Superintendent, Training College, Lahore.
6. Lala Sardha Ram, Government Pensioner, Lahore.
7. Lala Kanshi Ram of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj.

XVII. That it shall be the duty of the said committee of Trustees to cause to be erected out of the funds placed at their disposal in paragraph XVI hereinabove a suitable building close to the city of Lahore for a Public library to be called by such name as the said committee may decide and to purchase out of the said funds books, furniture, and other appliances for the said library.

XVIII. That it shall be the duty of the said committee of Trustees to maintain the said library in the state of efficiency with the income of the said house called the "Exchange" mentioned in para-

graph XVII, hereinabove which house at present yields a rental of rupees three hundred per month spending the income, after paying for the repair of the said house and the cost of library establishment, in the purchase of fresh books and newspapers and magazines and informing such a reserve fund as to the said committee of Trustees may appear desirable.

XIX. That the said library shall be under the control and management of the said committee of Trustees and shall be open to the use of the general public subject to such rules and regulations as the said committee of Trustees may frame on that behalf; provided that no charge shall be levied for the perusal of the books and newspapers and magazines in the said library during its hours of business.

XX. That my property in the stock and good will of the Tribune Press and Newspaper in Anarkali, Lahore, shall vest permanently in a committee of Trustees consisting of the following members, viz. :

1. Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose, M.A., B.L. Pleader, Chief Court, Lahore.
2. Mr. Charles Golok Nath, B.A., LL.B. Barrister-at-law, Lahore.
3. Mr. Harikishen Lal, B.A. Barrister-at-law, Lahore.

XXI. That it shall be the duty of the said committee of Trustees to maintain the said Press and newspaper in an efficient condition, keeping up the liberal policy of the said newspaper and devoting the surplus income of the said Press and newspaper, after defraying all current expenses, in improving the said newspaper and placing it on a footing of permanency.

XXII. That in the event of any of the Trustee or Trustees of any of the aforesaid committee of Trustees dying or resigning or declining or becoming incapable to act in the respective Trusts aforesaid, the remaining Trustees shall forthwith appoint new Trustee or Trustees to fill up the vacancy or vacancies so caused, bearing in mind, first, that the appointment made may be fully conducive to the attainment of the objects of the respective trusts and, secondly, that on the College committee of Trustees, none may be appointed who are members of the "Arya Samaj" or persons interested in a rival institution or who hold views and opinions antagonistic to the Brahmo faith.

XXIII. That the members of the aforesaid committee or Trustees shall be answerable only for their own respective wilful defaults and not for those of the other or others if of them and shall be protected for everything done by them in furtherance of the objects

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

of the respective Trusts hereinbefore set forth and the aforesaid committee of Trustees shall be competent all costs incurred in or in relation to their respective Trusts out of the estates respectively vesting in them and to reimburse themselves for any loss they have incurred in or in relation hereto out of the said estates.

XXIV. That all my proprietary rights including accessory and other rights and houses, gardens and lands in the *qasba* of Dinanagar in the Gurdaspur district shall vest in the committee of Trustees appointed by paragraph IX herein above and be incorporated among the properties mentioned in paragraph VIII herein above to be appointed in the same manner and for the same purpose as the said properties mentioned in paragraph VIII.

XXV. That I hereby bequeath to Mrs. L. Catherine Gill at present residing at Karachi the sum of Rs. 20,000/- to be paid as a legacy out of the current deposits at my credit in the Banks mentioned in paragraph VIII, clause (b).

XXVI. That I appoint Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose, M.A., B.L., pleader, Chief Court, Lahore, Mr. Charles Golok Nath, B.A., LL.B., Barrister-at-law, Lahore and Mr. Harikishen Lal, B.A., Barrister-at-law, Lahore executors of this my last will and testament.

The said executors shall pay all expenses connected with the probate and the administration of my estate, and after distributing my estate among the legatees and committee of Trustees the executors hereinbefore named and mentioned shall retire from office.

The said executors shall not be held responsible for any act or acts done by them in the discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon them.

XXVII. That all my estate save portions of the immovable property mentioned in paragraph II hereinbefore bequeathed to Sirdar Gajinder Singh consists of the self acquired property of my father, the late Sirdar Lehna Singh Majeethia, and of myself, the only son and heir of the said Sirdar Lehna Singh Majeethia, and has all along been held in sole, absolute and exclusive proprietary possession by me for upwards of the last 40 years. No one has or shall have any portion thereof of any manner, kind or nature whatever save what has been conferred by this my last will and testament.

XXVIII. That I make this my last will and testament of my own perfect free will and accord and in the full possession of my senses and it is my earnest wish and desire that no attempts shall be spared to fully carry out and give effect to the several objects hereinabove set forth and described in this my last will and testament.



In witness whereof I have to this my last will and testament set my hand thus 15th day of June, 1895.

Signed by the Testator and acknowledged by him to be his last will and testament in the presence of us present at the same and subscribed by us as witness in his presence and at his request and in the presence of each other.

Sd/- Dyal Singh  
William Ranaldson Clark,  
Surgeon Captain, I.M.S.  
Civil Surgeon, Lahore,  
Charles Henry Tilson  
Marshall, Colonel, I.S.C.  
Divisional and Session  
Judge, Lahore.

True Copy

Sd./- C.J. Hollifax, Registrar.

Lahore, 27th September, 1898.

Three years after drawing up the will, Dyal Singh died on September 9, 1898 of rheumatic fever.<sup>2</sup> Among those present by his bedside were Ruchi Ram Sahni and other friends, and, of course, the doctors, but not any relations; for he had given instructions that Rani Bhagwan Kaur should not be called to be by his bedside. Catherine Gill, who had come to Lahore some time earlier had gone back to Karachi. After the Sirdar passed away, Rani Bhagwan Kaur was informed. She was present at the cremation of the Sirdar's body in the courtyard at the back of his *haveli*. The last rites were performed according to Hindu tradition. Except for a small portion of his ashes, kept in the *Samadhi* to be shifted later to the proposed college, the rest were sent to Hardwar. Catherine Gill, who came to Lahore after three days, left for Batala where, assuming the name of Rani Lachman Kaur, she grabbed the ancestral *haveli* and village lands.

On September 18, 1898, on an application by Gajinder Singh, the Acting Registrar opened the will in the presence of Harkishen Lal and Jogendra Chandra Bose, pleader. On February 18, 1899, Jogendra Chandra Bose and others filed an application for probate of the will. This was challenged by Gajinder Singh, other relations, Rani Bhagwan Kaur and Catherine Gill. The last one claimed that she was his junior widow married to him according to Sikh rites and

2. The time of Dyal Singh's death has been given by Ruchi Ram Sahni who says he was present by the Sirdar's bedside, 0100 hrs. on September 9, 1898. This is at variance with the time given by *The Tribune*. Although the file of *The Tribune* for 1898 is missing, the report reproduced from the *Tribune* by the *Bengalee* of Calcutta gives the time as 1330 hrs. on September 9, 1898. The *Indian Mirror* of Calcutta, dated September 11, 1898, in its Lahore correspondent's report also gave the time as afternoon.

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

also that it was not his last will. She later withdrew and left it to Bhagwan Kaur, who challenged her contention to fight the case. So did Gajinder Singh. Rani Bhagwan Kaur contended that Dyal Singh was not a Hindu, because he ate meat, including beef, and ate with Muslims, Christians, Parsis on the same table and had Muslim cooks. As such the law under which probate was sought was not applicable to the case; that he was a Sikh turned Brahmo; also that, because of excessive drinking and dissipation, he had grown too weak, and was surrounded and unduly influenced by Brahmo friends to deny the rightful dues of Rani Bhagwan Kaur. The case was argued at length before the Chief Court at Lahore. The Court considered the evidence of Mrs. Catherine Gill unreliable, and that by the servants of Dyal Singh, now in the pay of Rani Bhagwan Kaur, to be an attempt to blacken the character of the Testator. On April 3, 1900, the Chief Court granted probate.

### The Tribune

Of the three institutions to which Dyal Singh had bequeathed his vast estate, there was only one that was in existence, namely *The Tribune*. And this was one institution to which his bequest was the minimum; it was the property in the shape of stocks in the press worth about Rs. 12000, in addition to the goodwill of the paper which could not be assessed in financial terms, but was certainly worth a lot. It was this asset of the Sirdar that attracted immediate attention.

Rani Bhagwan Kaur had engaged one Sultan Bux, a clever man well versed in the ways of the law courts, as her chief agent for conducting her cases relating to the will. The Rani agreed to pay him a hefty sum of Rs. 2 lakhs for successfully conducting the cases.

Sultan Bux and Rani Bhagwan Kaur got in touch with the editor Nagendranath Gupta and Manager of *The Tribune* Ram Chand. Gupta agreed to consider Rani Bhagwan Kaur as the sole proprietress of *The Tribune* (Dyal Singh was the sole proprietor of the newspaper) provided the Rani agreed to sell the newspaper back to him for a sum of Rs. 10,000 which was to be full and final payment for the goodwill, machinery and types, etc. Gupta forgot that the actual possession of the press and the newspaper premises was vested in the manager.

Ram Chand had joined *The Tribune* as a clerk in 1883, and had served the Sirdar well. He was loyal to the memory of the Sirdar whose salt he had eaten. He, therefore, informed Harkishen Lal that negotiations were afoot between Rani Bhagwan Kaur's representatives and Nagendranath Gupta for the take over by the Rani of *The Tribune* and the printing press. Harkishen Lal took the other two

Trustees, Ruchi Ram Sahni and Charles Golok Nath, into confidence. A strategy was drawn up. As part of the plan, Ram Chand was advised to give the impression to the Rani's representatives that he, too, was ready to handover the possession of the establishment for a consideration.

Accordingly, a deal was quietly arranged between Ram Chand and Sultan Bux. But Ram Chand kept Harkishen Lal posted with the details of the negotiations. A time was fixed between Rani Bhagwan Kaur's representatives and Ram Chand when possession of the newspaper and the premises was to be taken over by Sultan Bux. The three trustees, Harkishen Lal, Ruchi Ram Sahni and Charles Golok Nath, gathered an hour before the scheduled time for the take over bid by the Rani's people, at a closely place.

Harkishen Lal, who was at that time also a Wazir of the Raja of Sheikhpura, mobilised about twenty people from among the Raja's servants. Ruchi Ram Sahni also deputed four people from his own "workshop." All these twenty and odd men took up positions behind the bushes in the Golbagh facing *The Tribune* office and premises.

As decided by the trio, Ruchi Ram Sahni went to editor Nagendranath Gupta's small room situated in the corner of the building, and engaged him in conversation. By this time (on Saturday) Gupta had nearly finished the day's work and was awaiting to see the paper's issue of the day. In the midst of the conversation, Ruchi Ram casually got up and suggested to Gupta to come out of his small room "for fresh air," into the compound outside, and the two continued discussions underneath a tree, not very far from the building.

While Sahni and Gupta continued their discussions, Harkishen Lal and his men entered the press quietly from the backdoor. Ram Chand asked the workers and compositors to stop work and go out of the building.

While all this was taking place, Gupta was not aware of what was happening inside the press, all with the cooperation of Ram Chand. The premises were now bolted. All this done, Harkishen Lal went to the north-eastern corner of the building and waved his handkerchief to Ruchi Ram Sahni. This was the pre-arranged signal to convey that the mission had been achieved.

At this stage Sahni informed Gupta that his plan to hand over the possession of the newspaper and the press to Rani Bhagwan Kaur's men had been frustrated, and that the press and premises were now in the possession of the men posted by the three trustees. Gupta

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

fretted and fumed. Half an hour later appeared Sultan Bux with a dozen stalwarts and three servants of the Rani. They were all surprised to see Harkishen Lal, Ruchi Ram Sahni and Charles Golok Nath already in the premises ahead of them. Sultan Bux was non-plussed and crestfallen. There was resentment and despair written large on his face. His men retreated and Sultan Bux threatened those present with dire consequences.

The three trustees now conferred amongst themselves and decided that while they might move the court and police on Monday it was necessary to keep vigil on the premises that night and the following (Sunday) night. Ruchi Ram Sahni and another friend Dharam Das were deputed to keep awake by turns and over half a dozen men posted to ensure that the threatened attack by the Rani's men to break open the locks and to put their own to prove that they were in possession of the premises did not succeed. In fact, nothing whatsoever happened.

From that day on *The Tribune* came into the possession of the three Trustees mentioned in Dyal Singh's Will. As soon as the probate was taken, the paper was handed over formally to the Trustees who were also the executors of the Will.

"Thus *The Tribune* was saved," says the official history of *The Tribune*, "from a tricky 'sale' and a conspiracy hatched by Gupta and the Rani's agents. But for the timely move made by Lala Harkishen Lal, Mr. Charles Golok Nath and Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni the history of this newspaper might have been different."<sup>3</sup>

A triweekly in Dyal Singh's lifetime, it became a daily newspaper in 1906, and has been the most powerful vehicle of public opinion, playing a very important role in shaping the destiny of areas that constitute Pakistan and the present day Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, in fact the whole of Upper India in the days before partition.

In 1947, it was toying with the idea of starting a sister publication from Jalandhar. However, events took an ugly turn and the staff had to leave Lahore. Thanks to the transfer of some of its assets to India, and the orders for a new rotary, it was able to start from Shimla, later shifting to Ambala Cantonment and subsequently to Chandigarh. It celebrated its centenary with a good deal of fanfare in 1981.

During the period between Dyal Singh's death and the Chief Court's judgement on April 3, 1900, and Privy Council's on Aug. 5,

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3. *A History of the Tribune* by Prakash Ananda, Tribune Press, Chandigarh, 1986, pp. 46-7.

1903 some of the properties of the Sirdar had been grabbed by the men of Rani Bhagwan Kaur, Mrs. Catherine Gill and Gajindar Singh, especially immovable properties in Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore districts. There was prolonged litigation, between Rani Bhagwan Kaur, Mrs. Catherine Gill and the Trustees. The entire macabre episode, of which Ruchi Ram Sahni has given an interesting account, throws a good deal of light on the state of the Punjab and how the legal cases were conducted at the turn of the century.

In the early stages of the litigation, says Ruchi Ram Sahni, a man who said he was the *basta bardar* of Sultan Bux, came one day and said that he would come and tell the plans of Sultan Bux and his advisers. He said he was always present when Sultan Bux went to consult lawyers or when he had discussions with the Rani or other people in connection with the case. A process-server in a law court, he understood the nuances of such matters very well. He had been dismissed earlier for something, which he had done, but that did not take away his usefulness for the purpose for which he offered his services.

The information he supplied to Sahni was frequently tested by employing special messengers, who followed Sultan Bux on bicycle during his visits to the lawyers, and found correct and useful. The men who most ungrudgingly did this service for the trust were Lala Gur Das Ram Chhabra, a teacher in Dyal Singh High School and Pandit Atma Ram, also in the service of the school. He subsequently became the Editor and Proprietor of the weekly paper called the *Sewak*.

Sultan Bux's *basta bardar* was paid one rupee each time he came with some useful information. It proved to be of very great value and Sahni came to trust him. One of the pieces of information, which this man supplied was that it had been decided to bring in Dr William R. Clark, one of the witness to the original will, to give evidence. Clark was at the time Civil Surgeon of Lohore. The other witness was Col. C.H.T. Marshall, then a Session Judge at Lahore.

The exact words which Dr Clark was to use in the course of his evidence were dictated by Lala Lal Chand, the principal lawyer engaged by the Rani. Fighting the case, as if he had a personal interest in it, Lala Lal Chand, as President of the D.A.V. College Committee, had sanctioned a large sum of money to Sultan Bux from the D.A.V. College funds at a low rate of interest with the object of helping the Rani to fight the case.

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The exact words which Lala Lal Chand wanted Dr Clark to use in the course of his evidence in the Chief Court in the probate case were communicated by Sahni to Lala Harkishen Lal, who transmitted them on to trustee's lawyer, Turner. This Turner, a brother of Sir Charles Turner, Chief Justice of Madras, was a very highly connected person. He moved in the highest European circles at Lahore on a footing of equality.

He told Sir Arthur H.S. Reid, one of the two trying judges in the will case, what Clark was going to say, and how he had come to know of it. Sir Arthur Reid said he would find out if that was so from the manner of Clark's evidence, as also from the questions which he himself proposed to put to him. If he came to know that Clark was under some sort of outside influence, he would certainly discount his evidence.

Says Ruchi Ram Sahni, "I know that things like this are not permitted in law, but one also knows that many things, which are not permitted in law, are done all the same. I know that Reid was fully convinced that some kind of influence had been brought to bear upon Clark and that his evidence was not to be trusted without question."<sup>4</sup>

Another source of valuable information was an old man who came to Sahni from Amritsar and begged him to recommend the name of his son, then studying in Mayo School of Arts, for a scholarship of four rupees a month. This man was none other than the chief cook of Rani Bhagwan Kaur.

The cook, it occurred to Sahni at once, could be of immense help in supplying with information as to what was going on at the other end. This cook was a very intelligent man, as most servants employed in the old aristocratic families were, and as the Rani was a *pardha*-observing lady any communication from Sultan Bux was made to her by shouting to her across the closed door, or from behind a thick curtain. The principal of the school, where the cook's son was reading, was one Bhai Ram Singh, a close friend of Sahni. Leaving the man at his house Sahni went to Bhai Ram Singh and by coaxing and entreaties, made him sanction the scholarship for his son.

The cook of Rani Bhagwan Kaur had free access to her, and from that time onwards he made it a point to gather all the news he could to be communicated to Sahni, either personally by coming

4. The unpublished 33-page text of what appears to be a lecture by Ruchi Ram Sahni made available by the Tribune Library.

down to Lahore or by sending a letter in Gurmukhi, which he could himself write and which Sahni could easily read.

More often than not he would come down to Lahore himself and was paid one rupee as *bakhshish*. Of this one rupee only four annas went to his own pocket, the rest being the railway fare which he had to pay for the journeys to Lahore forward and backwards.

Information which the Rani's cook would bring from behind the *pardah* in the *haveli* of Rani Bhagwan Kaur, proved to be extremely valuable. At times even ordinary bits of information, like the visit of a person to the Rani or a talk which he had with the lawyer, and other matters of that kind proved to be of very great importance, either directly or as connecting links in the story.

The *basta bardar* of Sultan Bux and the cook of Rani, kept the trustees very well posted with fairly reliable information as to what was happening in the "enemy's camp" not only in connection with the probate case, but also with a dozen other cases, which arose out of more or less forcible possession of properties spread over three districts of the Punjab.

Ruchi Ram Sahni narrates a very interesting incident which saved the trustees a great deal of trouble in the probate case. He says Dr Sahib Ditta Mal, a *langotia yar* (bosom friend) of Sirdar Dyal Singh, was the medical man whom the Sirdar consulted during all the years they had known each other. Even though Dr Cunningham was officially in charge of the case during the last days of Sirdar's life, it was Dr Sahib Ditta Mal and his son who were constant attendants upon the patient.

Despite the Sirdar's closeness to Sahib Ditta Mal, the latter was "not above being purchased." In fact, his general reputation was not very good. When Sahni learnt that he had been summoned as a witness in the probate case by the Rani, it caused concern. Also information reached Sahni that, among other things, Sahib Ditta Mal was going to depose in the Chief Court that the Sirdar was of feeble mind, and that particularly during the month when the will was made, he was very much dejected and unwell, and he was found more than usually drunk in order to get over his depression. He was also going to say that the Sirdar was very fond of taking beef and that, for that reason, his own community did not dine with him or had any social relations with him.

Says Sahni, "Lala Harkishen Lal took a very serious view of the evidence which Dr Sahib Ditta Mal was expected to give. On one or two occasions, he said, it may influence the judges materially

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in their judgement in the probate case. He was arranging that Dr Berry be present in court during the evidence of Dr Sahib Ditta Mal, so as to help our lawyers in cross-examining him on medical lines. All this made me very anxious about the result of the probate case in the Chief Court.”<sup>5</sup>

One day Sahni had a brain-wave which proved to be effective. He says, “My idea was to get at Dr Behari Lal Dhingra, an M.D. from Brussels University, somehow or other, and get him to give his opinion, in writing, about the Sirdar’s ways and his eating and drinking habits, the social position which he occupied and the regard in which he was held by his community and by the public at large, and other matters on which, as we had learnt, his father was going to give his evidence against us. Dr Behari Lal Dhingra was at this time at Simla.

Writing to him directly would not have served the purpose I had in view. I wanted him to write to me, rather than I write to him. With this object in view, I contributed a few letters to the editor of *The Tribune* on the bogus medical degrees which some people in the Punjab, as in the rest of India, had secured in recent years. Soon after my first letter appeared, I received a letter, as indeed I had expected, from Dr Behari Lal Dhingra, praising my public spirit and my independence and all the rest of it for having rendered a great public service to the province. I replied to the letter at once, befittingly acknowledging his compliments and asking for further information on the subject, so as to enable me to write one or two more articles for *The Tribune*.

In a postcard I also said casually that he (Dr Dhingra) had known Sirdar Dyal Singh very well for several years and that he was also present for several weeks during the last illness of the Sirdar, and I asked him what his information and impression was about the Sirdar. Sure enough a reply came promptly giving me all the information I had wanted about the Sirdar, as well as about the bogus medical degrees. I exchanged one or two more letters with Dr Dhingra, and sent altogether three letters to *The Tribune* on the bogus medical degrees.

In the letters which Dr Dhingra sent to me from Simla he

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5. *Ibid.*



cleared all the points, on which I had asked for information or enlightenment in a manner entirely satisfactory to us. After knowing that this statements were perhaps a bit more favourable to us than the actual facts, as we knew them, warranted, I placed these letters before Lala Harkishen Lal and told him that if Dr Sahib Ditta Mal's evidence went against us, we could produce his son as contradicting the father. Lala Harkishen Lal's face beamed up and he said; "When the case is over, I will present a library of books to you." He got up from his seat and taking down two metal brackets he handed them over to me as a present in memory of the event. I treasure the brackets still."<sup>6</sup>

Lala Harkishen Lal made one important alteration in the plan which was suggested to him. Instead of producing the son after the father had given evidence, he said that he would show the letters to the father, just a short time before he was going to the court and tell him that, if he gave evidence against what the son was expected to give as shown by the letters, the son would be produced to contradict the father."

After some deliberation it was decided that Lala Sharda Ram, of the Brahmo Samaj, an old and intimate friend of Dr Sahib Ditta Mal, be made the bearer of the letters to Dr Sahib Ditta Mal on the day he came for evidence. Sharda Ram could be safely trusted with the custody of the letters. In every other way he was well suited for the mission with which he was charged.

On the day, Dr Sahib Ditta Mal's examination in the Chief Court was to take place, Lala Sharda Ram met him at the railway station, at about 9 a.m. The letters were shown to him. Sharda Ram's own impression was that he was very much taken aback at the sight of these letters and said that, but for them, he would possibly have given his evidence in favour of the Rani.

Continues Sahni :

"Further, as arranged previously by us, myself, Lala Dharam Das Suri and one or two others took turns in seeing Dr Sahib Ditta Mal during the interval between his arrival at Lahore and his going in the court room."

"For, according to the advice of Lala Harkishen Lal, it was arranged that we should not leave him alone during those two or

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6. *Ibid.*

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three hours, that is before his evidence began sometime in the afternoon. He was not allowed to meet Sultan Bux or any body else.

"The evidence in the court, though not exactly so enthusiastic in our favour as that of his son might have been, was not against us. I was not present in court during the evidence, as I had a class to take at college but, as soon as I had done with my college work, I made haste to go to the Chief Court on my bicycle. I was hailed from a distance by Lala Dharam Dass, who shouted out to me "*mubarik mubarik*."

Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni also tells us the role Mrs. L. Catherine Gill played. He says :

One of the properties round which a struggle between ourselves and the Rani and Mrs. Gill—the case lasted for a considerable time—was the big village of Mirza Jan situated about seven miles from Batala. Very early after instituting the probate case in the Chief Court at Lahore Lala Harkishen Lal, Charles Golok Nath, Golak Nath Chatterjee and myself went to Batala in order to study the whole position in regard to the village of Mirza Jan and find out how the villagers were disposed towards ourselves.

It was a sort of reconnoitring party. With the help of some men of the Batala Christian Mission, we tried to get into touch with the villagers to whom we offered liberal terms of tenure of their lands if they agreed to recognise us formally as being in possession of the village and to take the lease from us. It was not long before we discovered that the people of Mirza Jan were not well disposed towards us and that in case we took a strong action in any way, there was the risk of breach of peace.

We, therefore, returned to Lahore and, with the advice of our lawyer, Bakhshi Jaishi Ram, posted Lala Moti Ram at Batala with instructions that he should do what he could to enter into better relations with the inhabitants of the village. Through the help of one of my pupils, I made the acquaintance of the *Tehsildar* of Batala, Lala Ghasi Ram. In a short time, chiefly through the influence of the *Tehsildar*, Lala Moti Ram got into touch with some of the leading men at Mirza Jan, with the result that within a short time, a fair number of leases were drawn up in our favour. Unfortu-

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7. *Ibid.*

nately at this time, the Rani's men also appeared on the scene and, as they were already well known in the village, they succeeded in getting a number of leases written in favour of the Rani. There was, thus, danger of breach of peace between the two parties namely our man and his supporters among the villagers and the Rani's men and their supporters. Lala Moti Ram was called to Lahore for consultation.

It is necessary to mention here that at this time and for a couple of years later a small farmer of the name of Budh Singh who belonged to Mirza Jan and had a small piece of land on lease was taken into my private service on Rs. 7 a month. His duty was simply to remain at Mirza Jan, collect important news and bring it either to me at Lahore or to Lala Moti Ram if he happened to be at Batala. This constant stream of information proved very useful to us in as much as we knew exactly what was happening practically from week to week. It is strange that the visits of Budh Singh did not arouse any suspicion among the villagers, who were opposed to us. Budh Singh was also able to induce some of the bigger tenants, who were disgusted for one reason or another with the Rani's men to come over to us. One main reason, which must have influenced them in our favour was probably the fact that sooner or later we were bound to succeed and be in possession of the property and that, in case they did not treat us well at that time, they will have but little claim upon our kindness as real and permanent proprietors of the lands. This is the line of argument which Budh Singh was asked to use with the tenants. However, as many of the villagers were inimical to us it must have required no small tact and courage on his part to set about his business.

He did his work very well indeed and he well deserved the small pay that he was drawing from me. The trustees afterwards gave him a small reward, I think, the value of which was something between Rs. 50 and Rs. 100 only. A small compensation for a man who was doing so much in such critical and difficult circumstances. Budh Singh was a reservist and was drawing a small pay from the Army Department. He was a very shrewd and a wide-awake man. He carried out extremely well the onerous tasks with which he was entrusted from time to time.

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When the tension between the Rani's men and our own supporters in Mirza Jan became very keen, and it was feared that serious disturbances will break out in the village between the two parties, Lala Harkishen Lal and other advisers worked out a plan by which, while we gradually retired from the village we induced and helped Mrs. Gill to get into the village and take possession of as much of it as she possibly could. Our idea, of course, was that it would not be proper for us to get involved into serious criminal cases with the Rani's men. After Mrs. Gill was persuaded to get into the village in our place, there would be enough disputes and criminal cases between her and the Rani. We knew that Rani's case was very much stronger than that of Mrs. Gill, morally as well as legally.

In fact, Mrs. Gill had no case whatsoever. She could claim nothing beyond Rs. 20,000 that had been left to her in the will. With this object in view, Lala Moti Ram helped Mrs. Gill and her men intrude into the village. She was successful largely because she was a White woman, and the people had dread of a White woman. She was generally accompanied by a number of Christian women from the Batala Mission, whom she paid something, from time to time. The *Patwari* of Mirza Jan, who had been in our pay before and was helping us, was asked to transfer his help to Mrs. Gill.

Mrs. Gill had also found a paramour in a young influential person at Batala of the name of Sher Singh, who used all his local influence on the side of Mrs. Gill in the hope that he would be master of a big village like Mirza Jan. Within a very short time Mrs. Gill succeeded in driving out practically all the servants of the Rani from the village. In fact, Sunder Das, who was our principal man in the camp of the Rani was the only man allowed to remain in the village. In about three months, Mrs. Gill was able to recover some rent from the tenants at Mirza Jan. She proceeded in a very thorough manner to establish her possession on the village. She remodelled the *haveli* there, so as to be fit residence for herself. I have lived in those rooms myself and I must say that her standard of living must be very low indeed, but perhaps she was handicapped by many considerations. She had some of the gardens cut down and a large number of other trees were also cut down and the timber was

presented to her own favourites among the villagers. She adopted the name of "Rani Lachhman Kaur" and became a *Bara Memsahib* in the village. At this stage, Lala Moti Ram was again sent to Batala to renew his efforts for taking possession of the village from Mrs. Gill."<sup>8</sup>

On April 3, 1900, the Chief Court upheld the validity of the Will. However, Rani Bhagwan Kaur went to the Privy Council but lost litigation for other properties continued for a long long time. When the bulk of it ended, *The Tribune* wrote on September 9, 1907 the ninth death anniversary of the Sardar :

"...Then a compromise was effected by the executors of the Sardar's last Will and Testament with the Sardar's Rani Sahiba and his cousin, Sardar Gajinder Singh. The terms of the compromise, which duly received the sanction of the Chief Court, provided that the Rani Sahiba will receive a maintenance allowance of Rs. 450 per mensem for her lifetime, subject to no conditions or restrictions whatsoever, beginning with March 1, 1906, over and above the rights which the Sardar's Will had given to her, and two villages were set apart to safeguard the necessary amount during the Rani Sahiba's lifetime. Further the Rani Sahiba was to receive Rs. 15,000 for payment of her liabilities..."

As part of the compromise, some property and liquid assets of the College and Library Trusts were also transferred to Rani Bhagwan Kaur and other claimants from among the heirs of the late Sirdar. However, it was not the end of all litigation; Gajinder Singh and his family continued it for some more years.

As we have seen above Dyal Singh had left the bulk of his assets in the shape of prime properties in Lahore, lands, gardens and houses in Amritsar, Lahore and Gurdaspur districts of the Punjab and in Karachi in Sind and also cash and investments in banks and cotton mills, etc., to a board of Trustees which was to set up and run a first rate arts college. That's why, in subsequent litigation, the Dyal Singh College trust was accorded a status of "overriding basic precedence" among the three trusts.

The members of the College trust included well known educationists. One of them, Ruchi Ram Sahni, was a Brahmo, who took more than usual interest in the fulfilment of the objects of the three trusts. He was closely associated with the running, since its inception,

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8. *Ibid.*

## LEGACY OF DYAL SINGH MAJITHIA

of the Union Academy, which Dyal Singh had set up in his lifetime, and which became, in some ways, the precursor out of which grew the Dyal Singh College.

Dyal Singh's bequest to the trust was to establish and maintain, out of the funds and income of the property mentioned in paragraph VIII of his Will, "a first class arts college, with or without any school classes as to the said committee may appear desirable, to be called by such name as the committee may decide, for the spread and dissemination of a sound liberal education in the province, in which college every attempt shall be made to inculcate pure morality and the principles of theism consistent with the tenets of the Brahmo religion by the personal example of the teaching staff as far as possible and by instituting a course of lectures and such other similar means as may to the said committee appear proper and feasible."

Save as above provided, the Will laid down "the said college shall in all other respects be a thoroughly efficient non-denominational college affiliated to the universities of Calcutta and the Panjab, teaching up to the highest standards imparting instruction on the same lines generally as in the Government colleges in this country and looking after and prompting the physical, mental and moral well-being of the pupils on its rolls."

All efforts made by the trustees were frustrated by the prolonged litigation over the validity of Dyal Singh's Will almost till the compromise of 1906-07 was arrived at. Immediately thereafter, the trustees initiated action to set up the 'first class' college he had wished. None of the properties that Dyal Singh had bequeathed was suitable to house a college. However, there was one on the Empress Road that was suitable for housing a hostel named, aptly after Raja Ram Mohan Roy.<sup>9</sup> The trustees hired a building at a rental of Rs. 9,072 per annum and appointed Shri N.G. Welankar, a noted Brahmo scholar from Maharashtra, the first principal. That there was no proper office for him did not matter. What was needed was dedication which the trustees and the teachers brought to their work.

It was the done thing then that was the highest personage in the province be called to inaugurate the college. Babu Jogendra Chander Bose, one of the closest friends of Dyal Singh and an original

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9. The hostel named after Raja Rammohan Roy today is at the back of the Government Dyal Singh College on Nisbet Road, Lahore. The other hostel is still on Empress Road.

member of the college trust, led a delegation to Sir Louis Dane, Lt. Governor of the Punjab, to request him to inaugurate the Dyal Singh College on May 3, 1910. He agreed. In a message to the *Tribune*, Bose wrote that "to me, who was so intimately connected with the late lamented Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, during the last twenty years of his life, it has caused a thrill of joy that one of the cherished wishes of my esteemed friend is approaching fruition. . . . Not only trustees of the College, not only any particular section of the community, but the whole general public ought to feel delighted that the Dyal Singh College after all is going to be an accomplished fact."

"A misunderstanding seems to prevail in certain quarters, he added, that the college is intended to be a sectarian institution. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The will of Sardar Dyal Singh, which is foundation of the trust, distinctly lays down that the college is to be a thoroughly efficient, non-denominational institution, a first class arts college teaching upto the higher university standards and imparting a sound liberal education . . . . The property, including cash, devoted to these benefactions may be roughly computed to be worth about 30 lakhs of rupees and shows the magnanimity of the noble donor's head and heart."

The prayer offered at the inaugural function ended thus : "May this institution prove a fitting memorial not only of its great benefactor, but also of his broad sacrifices and enlightened patriotism, and may it inspire successive generations of youngmen with devotion to high ideals . . . in the service of God and humanity."

The college's logo carried the motto : "Gather ye the wisdom of the East and the West."

Nagendranath Gupta, who was then editing *The Leader* of Allahabad, wrote in *The Tribune* dated 4th May 1910 : "... Many students owed their education to Dyal Singh, and we cannot enumerate the number of widows and orphans for whom we got help from him. The various institutions in Lahore and elsewhere always received his generous support. His motto was :

"He who builds for God and not for fame,  
will not mark the marble with his name."

Gupta added : "Dyal Singh bequeathed all his property for the establishment of this college and for a theological library. This shows the broadness of his heart. He was, perhaps, the only unique man

10. *The Tribune*, dated May 4, 1910.

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in the Punjab who bequeathed his all for public good! And the sole object of his gift was the spiritual, moral, intellectual and political advancement of generations to come. My earnest prayer to God is that these fourfold objects may be fulfilled by its tribune gift—the college, the library and *The Tribune*.”<sup>11</sup>

Siva Nath Sastri, the official historian of the Brahmo Samaj, wrote in his book that “a college in his name was started by the trustees of The Dyal Singh Fund, amongst whom, members of the Samaj, like Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni and Babu Abinash Chunder Mazumdar, form a majority. This college has brought together, as teachers, several theists from Bombay and Bengal whose presence in Lahore, and participation in the work of the Samaj, is a source of new strength to the cause. Of the new arrivals, Messers N.G. Welankar and V.A. Sukhthankar from Bombay and Babu Bipin Behari Shehanabis from Bengal deserve special notice.”<sup>12</sup>

Sastri’s observation that “it is indeed a matter for rejoicing that the New Dispensationists and Sadharan (Brahmo) Samaj men work hard in hand in promoting the objects of the Samaj and the Punjab Samaj stands at present on the combined strength” is an indication that Dyal Singh was a devoted Brahmo, and was keen to bring light of enlightenment to the people in the Punjab.

It was only three years later, in 1913 that work on the building of the college at Nisebet Road was started initially with a hall.

The college met a felt-need and the number of pupils on its roll shot up from 190 in 1910 to 504 in 1913, the year in which the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore gave a large chunk of land near the Charing Cross for use as playground for the college.

In the first four years the college turned out 425 B.A.s., 4 B.Sc.s. and 4 M.A.s. Those passing B.A. (Hons.) in 1914 numbered 8 and as many as 10 in 1917. In the University’s Hons. Examination, Dyal Singh College students topped the list in three subjects, one a Hindu, another a Muslim and the third a Sikh. In the F.Sc. results of the Panjab University Dyal Singh College stood second in the Province.

A hostel, named after Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was set up in a building on Empress Road, owned by Dyal Singh and given to the trust. It had seats for about 60 pupils. In 1918, the pupils numbered 700.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *A History of the Brahmo Samaj*, pp. 443-444.



As the hostel was a great attraction for students coming to this college from outside, the Trust in the subsequent years rented two more buildings on Empress Road, for which it paid Rs. 16,809/- annually as rent. Within the first ten years, the college made remarkable progress. In March 1918, the Chancellor, a product of Balliol College, Oxford, while giving away prizes, observed that the college was unique in the sense that it was run on the patriotism and magnanimity of a single individual, like some of those in the U.S.A. and the U.K, where spiritual, cultural, academic and literary values are instilled in the pupils. The principal then paid a tribute to the three trustees—Shashi Bhushan Mukherjee, Prof. G.N. Chatterjee and Charles Golak Nath—who had passed away in the previous year.

Sir Edward McLagan, Lt. Governor of the Punjab, speaking on the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the college, on May 3, 1920, observed : "I had the privilege of being present at the opening ceremony of the college ten years ago, and it is interesting to find now that what was then a mere expectation of a college has now become a large and important reality . . .

It is clear from what Principal A.C. Roy has told us that the college has in the ten years of its existence made remarkable development and established itself firmly as one of the prominent educational institutions of the province.

Mr. Roy's report on the year now ended shows that the progress made is being steadily maintained. I am glad to see that he has not forgotten, as is sometimes done in modern reports, to mention the progress made by students in their studies. The college, which is making progress in spheres which constitute true education, has maintained a good standard in its studies also, and I congratulate it on the results.

I have no doubt that, in its development, the college has been helped not a little by its name. I was glad to hear Mr. Roy spoke first of the founder of the college and of the fact that it owes its origin to the liberality of one individual. I do not know what theory of history finds favour in the curriculum here. But I do think that in regard to the history of the college itself, the influence of individuals shaping events, must receive the fullest recognition. The personal touch which is imparted to the character of the college by the memory of the founder is a factor of great value, and one which you would do well to cherish. It is an asset for the possession of which many other institutions may envy you. The founder, as in your case, was a man of enlightend culture, one known for philan-

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thropy, one of an illustrious family, and one by birth a Punjabi of Punjabis. To this college, established by his liberality, I wish all success, and prosperity along the lines on which it has made its start."<sup>13</sup>

From its very inception the college laid a good deal of emphasis—greater than most other colleges—on sports, gymnastics and extra curricular activities, in addition, of course, to the academic pursuits. Prof. P.E. Richards joined the college as the head of English Department in 1911. His wife, Norah Richards, encouraged students to take interest in dramatics. The college dramatic society started in October 1912 built a permanent stage and theatre in the following year. It staged 'A Mid Summer Nights Dream', 'As you Like it', 'Merchant of Venice', 'Julius Caesar' etc. Some of these performances were staged on the occasion of such festivals as the Id, Basant, Lohri or Raja Ram Mohan Roy anniversary.

Such was the devotion of this couple to the arts that, even after the death of Prof. Richards, Norah stayed on in India and promoted theatre movement. She died in Kangra several years after independence. In addition to the dramatic arts, the college had several associations or clubs or debating societies e.g. a Cultural Club, Muslim Association, Guru Nanak Club, Young Men Brahma Association, Punjab Literary Club, Scientific Society, two literary bodies, Union Senate and Union Parliament. All these organisations were active. Debates were held on various subjects. In March 1912, a meeting held under the chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor C.R. Ewing debated whether there ought to be free and compulsory elementary education. When the Begum of Bhopal made primary education compulsory in her state and the Nizam of Hyderabad set up the Osmania University with Urdu as the medium of instruction, the College sent congratulatory messages. The college also encouraged the students to write, and in order to involve the students in the college activities through written reports, it started an eight-page college 'Letter', which in subsequent years became the "Union" then "Dyal Singh College Miscellany" and later still the "Dyal Singh College Magazine", with sections in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. There was a good deal of harmony and understanding between different classes in the college. When the Muslim Association observed the Id-i-Milad, Hindu students and teachers in large numbers participated in the function. A function organised by the Guru Nanak Club was presided over by Sir Abdul Qadir, who asked the students to carry the message of Sikhism to the far corners of the country.

13. *The Tribune*, dated May 4, 1920.

Two teams participating in the declamation contest were so chosen that one consisting of Hindu and Sikh students spoke on Islam, its culture and social values and the other team consisting of Muslim students spoke of the religion, cultural values and social systems of Hindus and Sikhism. The judges included Raja Narendra Nath, Mr. Justice Teja Singh, Prof. Abdul Majid, Principal O.H. Malik and R.B. Durga Das. There were arrangements in the college for instructions in different theological systems and Raja Ram Mohan Roy's ideals were followed. His anniversary was a function where all students participated. The teachers were also distinguished in their own disciplines. Quite a few of them made a mark in life. To name a few Sir S.S. Bhatnagar was the architect of India's national laboratories. L. R. Sethi and P. N. Kirpal retired as Secretaries to the Government of India, Som Nath Chib as D.G. Tourism, L.R. Nair as P.T.O., D.A.V.P., Director of Institute of Mass Communication. In 1917, arrangements were made for Hons. classes in Maths and Persian. In 1918, for M.A. in Persian, B.Sc. in Botany and Zoology, as also Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry. A Science Block was set up for Physics and Chemistry classes. Prof. S.S. Bhatnagar was given leave and financial help to go and study in Europe.

In 1922, a new lecture room was provided for the teaching of Maths. A noted Mathematician Hem Raj (who was later principal), who was teaching Maths, was nominated to the Academic Council of the Panjab University, as also Sheikh Abdul Qadir and Maulana Ilumuddin Saliq. A number of students did well and obtained top position and won scholarships, as they did in sports and gymnastics.

In 1924, the college started imparting military training and had a "Dyal Singh Detachment 4." This training was availed of by 73 students. It presented a guard of honour to Lord Irwin, which led, in years to come, to the acceptance of military science as an optional subject for B.A.

The college continued to make progress and gained in popularity with all communities. Of the 598 students on its rolls in 1924, there were 432 Hindus, 130 Sikhs and 33 Muslims. The number of teachers also shot up from 8 in 1910 to 18 and six demonstrators in 1924. In 1925, when the Panjab University approved the affiliation for Arabic classes, Maulana Ahsanullah Tajwar of Najibabad of the U.P., who was teaching in Sanatan Dharam Middle School, was appointed teacher for Arabic.

The number of students in the hostels also increased to 360 and the college trust society started the construction of a 100-room

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Cambridge hostel at Empress Road, at a cost of Rs. 1 lakh. The college was making strides. At the prize distribution ceremony on March 21, 1917, the Vice-Chancellor Sir John Maynard, who presided over the function, observed :

"I knew Sardar (Dyal Singh Majithia) a little in earlier days. I was younger than the Sardar, but I had read of him, what he was to friends. And as I knew of him and read of him, I wondered more and more why it had not struck any one . . . that it was necessary and desirable to write a life of him to tell the people of the great virtues he had . . . .

He never sought the smiles of fortune, was just, generous, wise, tolerant of the opinions of others, never sought the friendship of men of wealth or position, but of men of character. He gave to others, but sought nothing from them. He was a scholar, I might say a great scholar. He founded the Dyal Singh College and other institutions by his will, which showed his munificence and generosity.

He was what might be called a "great gentleman." He was a lover of music and arts, which required to be rehabilitated. He was a man of business, and always kept his accounts himself. He was absolutely truthful. He was a great Punjabi patriot, I might say, a great Indian patriot.

The Sardar was not only a great patriot, but also a great philanthrop. He gave freely in charity, but he never allowed his head to run away with the heart. Though his charities were numerous, he never gave until he was satisfied that it deserved his assistance. He made a great will, but he never boasted of what he did. He did good without telling people of it."<sup>14</sup>

In 1932, the college introduced co-education, with two women students, their number rising to five in the following year. Two women teachers were appointed.

A part of the college grounds was swampy. Thanks to the efforts of Prof. D.N. Bhalla (who later became principal) and the students, the land was reclaimed and converted into a beautiful lawn.

Three tennis courts were also laid. However, a drain passing by the college remained an eyesore. The matter was taken up with the Lahore Municipality and people that mattered, but all in vain, till

14. Speech delivered at the prize distribution function held on March 21, 1917, and published in the souvenir brought out on the seventh anniversary of the Dyal Singh College, pp. 27-29.

1938 when the new Prime Minister of the Punjab, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, took interest.

The number of students continued and rose to 967 in 1933. Four years later the enrolment was so heavy that there was little sitting place in the class rooms. Three part-time teachers were appointed. In 1938, those on the rolls numbered 1099 (including 22 women students) consisting of 721 Hindus, 174 Muslims and 195 Sikhs.

In 1944, the college's scheme for teaching English up to M.A. was approved. Arrangements for the study of Sanskrit up to M.A. were also made. Interestingly, there were arrangement for the teaching of Bengali as an optional subject.

Students in 1945 numbered 1,031. To meet the needs of students some rooms in Dewan Motilal's house on Nicholson Road were taken on rent. A cooperative students store was started in 1945 to tide over the war time shortages in essential goods for the students.

Dyal Singh College was a symbol of education and culture. Teachers loved money only apparently. In fact, they loved books. Their temperament was that of an ordinary *faqir*. It is true that in those days the needs in one's life were fewer. Prices had not spiralled. Yet they did not form unions to ask for wage increase. Nor did they use political arguments. And although there were agitations and there were *hartals* also, all these were outside the boundary walls of the college.

According to an old alumni Aijaz Hussain 'Batalvi', before the creation of Pakistan, communal amity was one aspect of the life in the city of Lahore. Here was a multi-denominational society consisting of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Bahais and Parsis, who lived it was a characteristic of the city in communal amity. Respect for other faiths was tradition in the Dyal Singh College. Alongside was also the traditions of mutual understanding. A teacher of the history department, Lajpat Rai Nair, invited Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah to come and address the college students. The Quaid-i-Azam accepted the invitation and addressed the students in the big hall.<sup>15</sup>

The Secretary of the Debating Club was a Sikh. He invited Sir Abdul Qadir to address the students on the main influences in his life. Hussain 'Batalvi' says that the teachers never took leave nor did the

15. Diamond Jubilee Souvenir of the Government Dyal Singh College, Lahore, 1988.

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students play truant. *Hartals* had not yet become every day affair. Examinations were held twice every year. Those students who came late to the class were not marked present, and there were no proxies.

"My two years in the college atmosphere gave me plenty of self-confidence", says Rehman Muzlib, an old alumni of Dyal Singh College, writing about his days in the college. "In my time the atmosphere in the Dyal Singh College, from the educational viewpoint, was very fruitful." Although the country watched several agitations and campaigns, in the college it was like "All Quiet on the Western Front." Our professors came to the college solely with the object of teaching the pupils. The students also came only to study.

"Never was a political issue raised within the precincts of the college. In their spare time, the pupils went to the library and sat with a book, or a journal or a newspaper. The atmosphere was unsuited to any other activity. Means of transport and entertainment were limited. But there was never a paucity of books.

"Unlike these- days, when in the showroom one sees seminude, or sensational and provocative books, in my time one got only good books in bookshelves. The book trade had not yet bade good-bye to character-building and social values. For one shilling one got a book in the Penguin series. All the volumes of the History of Greece were available for just fifteen rupees !

"Unlike the elections of today, dominated by gun totting and vying with those to the assembly elections, the Union elections were held quietly, as if nothing had happened. Election fever affected only the three or four candidates, or their dozen or so supporters. In fact, there was no such thing as election fever. The majority group did not assert itself. Only a few students canvassed among friends and that too outside the classrooms and always in low tones. On election day, the students collected in the hall at the appointed time. The candidates were called one by one and were asked to speak on a given subject. Those present elected whom they considered the best. That was the end of the election process. There was no mention afterwards."<sup>16</sup> According to Prof. Shujauddin "for character-building and intellectual and proper development of student, a booklet in English was circulated among the students. It carried the following Do's and Don'ts ;

1. Do not come to the college without properly attending to personal

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16. *Ibid.*

hygiene; washing your face, brushing your teeth and dressing your hair.

2. Do not spit, clean or dig your nose in public. Make use of your handkerchief.
3. Do not keep the shirt outside the trousers.
4. Do not come to the class-room without your fountain pen, notebook.
5. Do not leave the door open on entering a class-room.
6. Do not put your hand in your coat or trousers pockets when talking to your teacher.
7. Do not talk in the class-room.
8. Do not call out by proxy during the roll call, or serious action will be taken.
9. When making a request to your teacher always use the word 'Please' e.g. Please mark me present.
10. Do not talk in the library.
11. Do not come to the college without Identity Card.
12. Do not crowd at the college gate, the college bus stop, the college office, or the Principal's office and the staff-room.
13. Do not write or scribble on the walls and furniture.
14. Do not drag or shift about the chairs.
15. Do not smoke in the college premises.
16. Do not omit to wipe your shoes on the doormat before entering the Principal's office.
17. Do not enter the Principal's office if a student or visitor or teacher or clerk is already with him. Wait for your turn.
18. Do not say 'O.K.' while talking to your teachers, say 'Yes Sir.'
19. Do not miss to greet your teachers whenever you meet them."

Then came partition. By August 15, 1947, Hindu and Sikh students migrated to India, leaving alone 200 Muslim students. Muslim teachers in the college included Abid Ali Abid, Allama Tajwar, Ashiq Mohammad Ghori and Maulvi Mohammad Ashraf. Dewan Anand Kumar, Dean of the Science Faculty in the Panjab University and member of the trust and Secretary of the Dyal Singh College trust, sent a telegram to Prof. Abid Ali Abid with a cheque for Rs. 1,000, asking him to take over as principal of the college and, with the help of Sheikh Abdul Haque, realise the rent of Dyal Singh Mansion in Lahore and run the college.<sup>17</sup> Mr. Justice S.A. Rehman, the Custodian appointed Abid and Sheikh Abdul Haque as co-trustees. As they were familiar with the Dyal Singh College traditions, the

17. Told to the author by Dewan Gajinder Kumar.

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college was able to maintain a continuity. The name now is Government Dyal Singh College. While the trust properties in Lahore were taken over by Waqf Board, those in Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts were taken over by the Dyal Singh College Trust that came to Delhi. Dewan Anand Kumar, member secretary of the trust succeeded in getting a valuable evacuee property in Karnal allotted to Dyal Singh College at Karnal. Another college under the same name was started by Dyal Singh institutions' admirers in New Delhi. This is under the U.G.C. There are thus three Dyal Singh Colleges in the Indian sub continent.

#### **Dyal Singh Public Library**

Owing to the protracted litigation over the validity of Dyal Singh's Will, it was 12 years after the founder's death that the board of trustees appointed by him was able to set up Dyal Singh College. It was to take another eighteen years before the third Board of Trustees could set up Dyal Singh Public Library.

The idea of founding the public library was suggested by the Brahmo leader Pratap Chandra Mazumdar during his visit to Lahore early in 1895, the year in which the Will was made. Mazumdar had stayed in the rooms which were then known as the "barracks", in Nisbet Road. This was the site where Dyal Singh Public Library later came to be built.

Dyal Singh had provided a sum of Rs. 60,000 and income from the valuable building called 'the Exchange.' During the pendency of the litigation, the building seems to have been managed by Dyal Singh College Trust. In 1923 it was sold to the Ganga Ram Trust for Rs. 423,000, which with Rs. 60,000 by Dyal Singh College Trust had become about Rs. 8 lakhs by 1928. And it was with this money that the barracks were demolished and the public library's imposing building put up the selection of books for the library was excellent since its inception in 1928. From the original members of the board of trustees, Charles Golak Nath had died in 1911. Jogendra Chandra Bose also passed away in 1921. An old hand of the library has told me that the members of the Board of Trustees in early 1939s were: Dewan Anand Kumar, Chunilal, economist Brij Narain; Principal G. C. Chatterjee, R. C. Soni, Bar at Law, Sita Ram Kohli and Ruchi Ram's elder son B.J. Sahni.

The library soon became popular. It had 3,000 regular members. The number of books stocked in the library was 22,000. It is said that P.C. Soni who, while visiting the Reserve Bank's office in Lahore in August 1947, saw that Government securities worth Rs. 7 lakhs in the name of Dyal Singh Library were lying there. As a pleader and trustee he took powers and brought them over to Delhi. And this became the nucleus of funds to build Dyal Singh Public Library of Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg.



## Book Review

### I

*The Sikhs in Ferment—Battles of the Sikh Gurus* by Professor Gurbachan Singh Nayyar, Published by National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 1992, pp. XIII+127, price Rs. 175/-.

The book under review is the work of an as eminent a scholar as Professor Gurbachan Singh Nayyar. The book has the impress and authority of his erudition. It is a welcome addition to the literature on Sikh history. The work deals with the compelling circumstances that forced Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh to transform their followers into a chivalrous race. It is a cogent account of the valiant struggle of the sixth and tenth Gurus. Guru Gobind Singh is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable personalities in history. In his short life span of forty two years he personified the concept of saint-soldier. He shook the people from the comatose state of helplessness under the Mughal yoke and through tremendous personal sacrifice brought back the spirit of honour and bravery.

This is an indepth and analytic study based on original sources. It is a highly readable account of the rise of Sikhism.

*The Sikh in Ferment* is also a valuable compendium of literary evidence on a period that has always been, in a measure, controversial. This study has attempted to remove some historical inaccuracies that had crept into the history and had been accepted as facts.

The author has planned this work under seven chapters followed by a comprehensive bibliography and index. There are eight photographs in the book out of which two are of Takht Keshgarh Sahib, Anandpur and the remaining six of the Gurdwaras of Muktsar.

In the opening chapter the learned author has endeavoured to make a critical assessment of the contemporary and semi-contemporary sources. The author has laid more emphasis on the Gurmukhi sources such as *Bhai Gurdas's Vars*, *Sri Guru Sobha*, *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin*, *Sau Sakhi*, *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, *Bansavalinama*, etc. A critical appraisal of all these sources forms the sum and substance of this chapter.

The following chapter traces the history of the Sikh thought from *roce ton roh* or how the Sikhs passed on from transitioning

stage of mere protest to an armed resistance. It explicitly states how the Sikhs resorted to an aggressive at the same time to defensive stage. At times in the face of exigencies of the circumstances adopted the calm and peaceful resistance offering sacrifices made for the national cause. The demise of Guru Arjan momentarily made the Sikhs remorseful and helpless but they remained a well organised community ready to bear the onslaughts of the tyrannical government with a dogged determination. Guru Hargobind taught the use of arms to his followers seeing how peaceful resistance to oppression had proved abortive. Several people offered to join his service (as warrior) in the cause of *dharma* and very soon considerable number of *Majha* youths were enlisted for the cause. They were the people who offered to do and die for their religion and righteous cause. These formed the nucleus of his future volunteer corps. They were transformed into a new type of saint-warriors capable of defending themselves and protecting others against the tyrannical oppression of the intolerant rulers.

The army organisation of Guru Hargobind and his battles against the Mughal Government has formed the third chapter. During Guru Hargobind's guruship five successful battles were fought: at Rohila (1631), Amritsar (1634), Mehraj (1634), Kartarpur (1635), and Phagwara (1635). The significance of the battles was that new vistas were opened for a future course of action to be followed by the community.

The fourth chapter deals with the Pre-Khalsa battles of Guru Gobind Singh against the Mughal forces and hill chiefs. The Guru was obliged to fight all these battles against his wishes. These battles were aggressively defensive. The chronology of the battles has been narrated in their proper chronological order. The study of the battles is macroscopic.

The fifth chapter 'The Institution of the Khalsa' takes notice of the milieu of the creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh and describes its impact on the Sikhs and the future course of Punjab history. The injunction for the Khalsa has to be seen in connection with Guru Gobind Singh's conception of God. The Guru wanted to strengthen the organisation of the Khalsa and thus evolve out of the Sikhs a powerful engine of revolutionary, a force to fight tyranny and injustice.

The sixth chapter of the book, in fact, is a continuation of the fourth chapter. It first enumerates the causes and events and then delineates the two major problems faced by Guru Gobind Singh in

terms of securing the life and honour of the down trodden and fighting against the time honoured false social institutions by resisting social and political tyranny.

The seventh chapter "Causes of the Success of the Sikhs and their War Organisation" enumerates as is clear from the title itself the reasons behind the success of the Sikhs. The critical situation they were passing through is also investigated by the author diligently.

The book is, on the whole, sauely written. Because of its authenticity and reliability the book would be immensely useful for researchers as well as general readers. The general get up of the book is good but the price is on the higher side.

DEVINDER KUMAR VERMA\*

## II

*Chhotu Ram in the Eyes of His Contemporaries* (ed.) by Pardaman Singh, Gitanjali Publishing House. New Delhi, 1992, pp. VII+191, price Rs. 190.

Dr Pardaman Singh's *Chhotu Ram* has two methodological features that not only distinguish it from all other works on this theme till date but deserve the attention of all serious students of Punjab politics from 1914 to 1945. First, the book is in relatively a new genre called oral history. As such it is based less on documents and more on persons (forty four in this case) who have been actually living through the events, and now cherish their memories in their own ways and countries, India, Pakistan and Great Britain. In other words, we are dealing with a living history which directly speaks through the men none of whom is a historian in the conventional sense. As they narrate event or the event-person, they usually fall back upon anecdotes, myths and fables. Their 'stories' may or may not be true but are indispensable for a historian, especially the one interested in a people's collective psychology or things like ethnicity and political ideology, because they help him to identify the motive forces that have been guiding them to group actions through the ages, and have been, doing so, the motors of their history. Hence, oral history is not only a living history but also a direct history. It means two things. First, history is more or less beyond document. Two, it is not entirely the brain-child of historian. It exists without the historian too because people

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persevere it to some extent and for some time. When collected it enriches our documents and sharpens our sense of the past.

Further in this context, Dr Singh highlights the fact that the source material in oral history is self-generating. The men from whom information is derived talk as much of Chhotu Ram as of themselves while describing their relationships with him. Their accounts are simultaneously biographical and auto-biographical.

Secondly, *Chhotu Ram* had a thirty-two page long *Introduction* by the author. Substantial portion of it is related to Chhotu Ram's desertion from the Congress in the wake of Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement. This portion is based upon official documents collected from the record room of Rohtak D. C. For the first time this material has been put to proper interpretation. It shows that Chhotu Ram's duties as a British created Zamindar provides us the key to his not only anti-Congress posture but also his political behaviour as a Unionist. It also shows that the British, no less than the Mughals and Sikhs ruled Punjab through the Zamindars.

One can gather from the book under review that B. H. Baden Powell's 'I am a poor-man--a Zamindar' thesis goes a long way to explain Chhotu Ram's 'Bechara Zamindar' ideology. But the latter was helped by others too. By identifying nationalism and freedom with *swaraj* for rural and caste upliftment, C. F. Andrews and Swami Shardanand made it legitimate for Chhotu Ram to reduce or expand the notion of Zamindar in accordance with his own needs. It could be reduced to 'Jat-Zamindar' or stretched to 'Punjab Zamindar.' 'Zamindara politics' of the Punjab Unionists was a politics of village against the city minus village. It was a response to 'urban politics' of the pre-Gandhian Congress. But it quickly acquired a character of its own.

Going by the version of Chhotu Ram's *Contemporaries*, he succeeded in shaping the 'Jat-Zamindars' in his own image. What was this image like? It had the following elements or shades that were also the phases through which it was formed—

1. 'Bechara Zamindar'—poor, inarticulate, unorganized but exploited peasant without knowing his oppressor.
2. 'Anti-bania Zamindar'—struggle conscious farmer and capable of identifying his exploiter as *bania* in the *mandi*.
3. 'Active Zamindar' ready to dabble into politics, organized and articulate.
4. 'Zamindar—politician'—Kulak, political thinker and actor in his own right.

5. 'Punjab Zamindar'—partially tamed by nationalism and communalism but hardly capable of transcending any one of the two, and an imperial being like the 'Punjab administrator' in the 19th century.

Events over-took Chhotu Ram but not his image, it lingers on till date. All the 'source-persons' including Dr Pardaman Singh are witness to this image. It cannot be otherwise. In oral history it is difficult to distinguish author from the authors.

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